May 26, 1997

Rev. Marge Ragona
Covenant MCC
PO Box 101473
Birmingham, AL 35210

Greetings!!!!

The Ministry of Diversity in Spiritual Community/Weaving Intercultural Networks of Diversity (M.D.I.S.C./W.I.N.D.) co-chairs wanted to inform you that Kay Hendrix, Stevie Hoven and Craig Dean (MCC Gadsen) were participants in the "How to Diversify Your Church" workshop at District Conference in Tennessee.

It is our hope that they came back and shared with you and the church the information that they received at the workshop. The workshop was very well attended and we are glad they chose to attend.

The information that was provided is to help guide the church in how to be more diverse. Every church is unique and what may work in some may not work in others. The information can be tailored to fit your congregational needs. As we continue to grow as a Fellowship, it is important that we continue to make our congregations as welcoming and as inclusive as possible. It is through workshops such as this one, that churches can come together and learn from each other and go away energized and ready to make a place for everybody in God's House of Worship.

If at any time you would like to contact us about doing a workshop, do not hesitate. If you need more of the handouts that were provided at the workshop we would happy to send you those also.

Again, it was great having members of your church participate in our workshop and we hope that they will continue to be a blessing to your congregation.

Peace in Christ,

Sheryl Jones
M.D.I.S.C. Chair
(919) 859-9413
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Stan Kimer
W.I.N.D. Chair
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sckimer@vnet.ibm.com

cc: Craig Dean
Kay Hendrix
Stevie Hoven

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GLAD - MDISC - WIND

March 25, 1997

Memo To: GLAD District MCC Pastors

From: Sheryl Jones - GLAD District MDISC Representative
Stan Kimer - GLAD District WIND Representative

Subj: **MDISC / WIND Diversity Survey**

At the most recent district conferences, we were both elected at the MDISC / WIND sessions to serve as the district representatives of Ministry of Diversity in Spiritual Community / Weaving Intercultural Networks of Diversity until the Spring Conference, 1998. As you may recall, MDISC / WIND are the new names for the former ministries of DPOC (Department of People of Colors) and WPHR (White People Healing Racism), and the new names represent the move of bringing these two ministries into one concerted effort to make the ministry more inclusive.

As your new district representatives, we want and need to get a clearer perspective on the District's ministries and how the District prioritizes these ministries. This information will help us find more direction for the MDISC/WIND ministry. Attached is a very short confidential survey with a return stamped envelope. Please take the time to fill out this survey and return it within the next few days. We will then summarize the results to be included with a report for our Spring District Conference.

If you have any questions or if we may be of service, please do not hesitate to call on us.

Peace in Christ,

Sheryl + Stan

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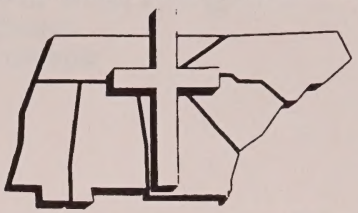
The Department of People of Color
2564 Bradford Square, Atlanta, GA 30345 (404) 325-5208
The Division of White People Healing Racism
2644 Chesterfield Avenue, Charlotte, NC 28205 (704) 343-9070
of the Gulf Lower Atlantic District



February 16, 1992

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Greetings to you with the assurance of grace and peace from God our Source, Jesus Christ our Saviour and the Holy Spirit our Sustainer.

The Steering Committee of our first DPOC/WPHR Leadership Conference is happy that you have registered for the conference. We look forward to seeing you again and to have the opporunity to fellowship, learn, commune and worship together.

The activities for the conference have been designed to train and empower individuals to return to their home churches with a complete knowledge of our fellowship, district, DPOC, WPHR, leadership skills, costs and joys of leadership, the need of our communities, and a district-wide strategy for implementing the goals which we decide. Yes, this is a lot for one day. But that which we ask in Jesus' name shall be given to us.

Please look over the conference materials before coming to Atlanta. Also, bring your conference materials with you as we do not have replacement packets.

Again, we are so glad that you are coming to the conference. May God continue to bless you and your ministry.

Sincerely,

The Steering Committee
DPOC/WPHR Leadership Conference

Community Outreach -
People who chose to come together, intentionality, bonding, mutual respect, growth, = common denominator
- those displaced
- all people
- those searching - faith issues
- any Christian who chooses

DPOC - A/A, Asian, Hispanic,

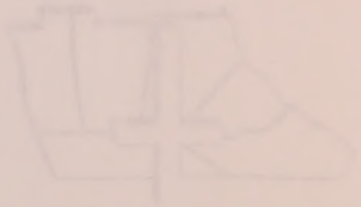
Barriers = Class, racism, cliquishness, worship style different, making assumptions; no one to relate to, language, lack of representation, music,

Positives = Inclusivity, diversity, warmth,

Xtian Social Action Programs
AIDS mnts - Drug
Bar ministry
Homelessness / Poverty = Social injustice
Political action
Food banks
Awareness
Position of oppression

Costs + Joys of Leadership
Faithful to the call
Authority of God

Matt 28:18-19
Matt 23:15



Willi White

DPOC/WPHR Conference Schedule and Program

First Metropolitan Community Church
800 N. Highland Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia

February 22, 1992

8:00	CHURCH OPENED FOR EARLY ARRIVAL	
9:00	BREAKFAST AND WELCOMING	
9:30	FELLOWSHIP STRUCTURE	Rev. Jay Neely GLAD District Coordinator
10:00	DISTRICT STRUCTURE	Raymond Barreras, Ph.D. Lay Representative, First MCC
10:30	BREAK	
10:45	DPOC STRUCTURE	Rev. Delores Berry UFMCC DPOC Executive Committee J. R. Finney II GLAD DPOC Chairperson
	WPHR STRUCTURE	Judy Kiser UFMCC WPHR Steering Committee Rev. Polly Ireland UFMCC WPHR Steering Committee
1:00	LUNCH	
2:00	CONFLICT AND ANGER	Rev. Bob Darst GLAD WPHR Chairperson Rev. Joy Browne Chaplain, Spelman College
2:45	BREAK	
3:00	COMMUNITY OUTREACH PANEL DISCUSSION	Darryl Walker, Panel Moderator, All Saints MCC Rev. Reid Christensen, First MCC Vivian Gillan, MCC Mobile Rev. Larry Nunnley, MCC Nashville Glenna Shepherd, All Saints MCC Rev. LeeVaughn Smith, First MCC
4:00	COSTS AND JOYS OF LEADERSHIP	Rev. Delores Berry
4:45	BREAK	
5:00	GOAL SETTING (open floor discussion)	Facilitators: J. R. Finney II and Rev. Bob Darst
6:15	DINNER	
7:30	WORSHIP AND HEALING SERVICE	Rev. Delores Berry, Preaching

EXAMPLE 10-2

Interpreting Body Language[7]

Meaning	*Behavioral Clues*
Openness and sincerity	open hands and arms uncrossed legs and arms unbuttoned coat or collar leaning slightly forward in the chair
Defensiveness	rigid body tightly crossed arms and legs clenched fists downcast head/poor eye contact
Disinterest, boredom, or aloofness	staring at the ceiling draping a leg over the arm of a chair cupping the head in the palm of the hand foot swinging doodling
Pondering or thinking	hand on cheek chin stroking leaning forward with good eye contact head tilted slightly to the side
Suspicion, secrecy, rejection, or doubt	minimal or no eye contact touching or rubbing the nose turning away from the speaker
Readiness	hands on hips sitting toward the edge of the chair
Frustration or opposition	pinching the bridge of the nose rubbing the nape of the neck running hands through hair hand wringing
Authority, confidence, superiority, or dominance	straddling a chair, leaning on the back steepling hands and fingers feet on the desk leaning back, fingers laced behind the head
Nervousness	clearing the throat chain smoking covering the mouth while speaking fidgeting, pacing, or tapping fingers

Meeting Road Maps

By meeting road maps we are referring to an agenda, meeting script, or visual aid to lend structure and direction to the meeting. Whether or not your agenda is written, it is a primary control device. Directing attention to the agenda periodically is useful when participants get off the subject, lose sight of the objectives of the meeting or the action they are expected to take on a particular item, or take up items out of order. A polite reminder, "We can take that up under new business. Right now we have to

[7]Adapted from Phillip L. Hunsaker and Anthony J. Alessandra, *The Art of Managing People* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1980), pp. 163–177.

make a decision on whether or not we are going to move operations to New York," or "You all had better be mindful that the boss expects an answer on this issue; all this 'goofer dust' isn't helping us find one," will usually do the trick.

A second type of road map we have employed with great success is the use of, for lack of a better term, a *meeting script.* The script takes the agenda to a greater level of detail. It is a handwritten or typed outline used by the leader that includes

- notes on introductions
- key discussion points relative to *each* agenda item
- questions you feel the group should answer
- reminders of when you are to refer to or use prepared audiovisual aids or write an important point on a flip chart or blackboard
- notes on when others are to offer input or make presentations
- verbatim material that may be difficult to recall while in session
- summaries of your comments on or criticism of documents being taken up at the meeting.

The script is prepared in advance and runs three or four pages in length. The varied use of boldface and regular size handwriting or type, as well as underlining and colored pens for emphasis, is helpful.

The third type of road map is visual aids to provide a "billboard" agenda or discussion guide. This is done several ways. First, put the agenda on a flip chart or blackboard for all to see. This provides an ever-present reminder or big picture of what the group must acccomplish before adjournment. Second, prepare separate slides, overhead projector slides, or pages of a flip chart to present material similar to some of the items suggested for the script. Revealed in proper sequence these materials have a tremendous focusing effect on discussion. Third, consider starting the meeting with blank visual aids for use in recording key points made or questions raised during the discussion. We have seen meetings sail through an agenda on this technique. For instance, someone—perhaps the leader, but preferably another person—records the material on the pages of a flip chart. Each page, as filled, is removed from the pad and taped to a wall or blackboard for future reference. It is not uncommon to fill up a whole wall with such notes. This approach has many advantages.

- It allows one-time coverage and recall of discussion points, alleviating the need to retrace the same ground. Once a participant sees his or her point recorded for all to see and appreciate, he or she is free to explore other aspects of the issue being discussed, unencumbered by the burden of having to remember the first point.
- It allows the group to discuss, organize, and recall a tremendous volume of material without losing sight of individual points or becoming confused.
- It provides a ready reference for the group when it returns from a break or temporary hiatus in discussion, as well as a means of bringing latecomers up to speed without slowing the group.

- It ensures that each point is understood by all. As a person's comments are recorded, he or she can make corrections right then and there.
- It ensures that everyone is considering the same points as they make decisions or take action.
- It helps the group record priorities, decisions, or actions. Key points can be starred, numbered in order of importance, or underlined. When the group selects a particular course of action or decisional alternative from among several, their selection can be circled or checked off.
- It serves as a frame of reference when matters taken up later in the meeting relate to points made earlier.
- It gives the group a sense of accomplishment. They can see what they have done.
- It builds a foundation for minutes and meeting follow-up activities.
- It precludes disagreements about what the group considered or did relative to the agenda.

The use of the agenda, meeting script, or visual aids as control mechanisms helps guide the group through the entire meeting. However, the use of meeting scripts and visual aids can be just as effective in handling discussion on a single topic.

Verbal Communications that Create Order

The second category of tools that improve the quality of discussion involve *verbal communications that lend order* to how individual agenda items are addressed. Each subject taken up in a meeting will have its own discussion requirements. Discussion in a problem-solving meeting will vary substantially in content and sequence from that in a meeting of people trying to close a business deal or plan a social activity. Some common threads exist, however, and you should ensure that they appear in discussion of almost any agenda item.

The first is the *introduction* of the topic. What is this agenda item all about? What is the group expected to do? The second is the *provision of comments, background, and details*. This occurs when meeting participants interact to create an initial base of information as a jumping-off point for action or decision making. The third is that of *questioning and clarifying issues*. This process resolves misunderstandings, amplifies or adds to information already provided, places discussion points in a larger context, allows exchange of affective or value-based data, and permits participants to judge for themselves the relative importance of various issues or alternatives. The fourth is *summary and preparation* for action or making a decision. This is where someone opens with, "This is what we know," "Then we all agree that . . .," or "Let's see if everybody has it . . ." and proceeds to outline key elements of information, the steps required for

action, or the types of decisions to be made. The fifth thread is actually *taking action or making a decision*.

The sequence in which these discussion events occur may vary from subject to subject. The issues surrounding one agenda item may be so clear and simple that little background, questioning, or summary are necessary. The next topic may involve a problem so complex or convoluted that providing supplemental information, questioning, and summarizing need to be repeated in serial fashion. The task of the leader is to gauge when a particular tactic is necessary. If you attempt to get a decision out of the group before it fully understands the issue or has an opportunity to ask questions, you will likely be rebuked. Conversely, to drag matters out when the group is clearly ready to act brings on fits of frustration and disgruntlement.

The processes of *questioning* and *summary* are perhaps the most important in terms of keeping the discussion on track. To appreciate fully the importance of questioning, let us look for a moment at the purposes of well-timed and articulated questions. Example 10–3 includes a list of such purposes as well as sample questions. In a meeting everyone may have or may be provided with some baseline information on a particular issue. But more information and opinions may be needed to accomplish a specified objective. Three things can happen. The participants will ask questions to obtain that information. They will sit puzzled and scratch their heads. Or they will smile knowingly to give the impression they fully understand what's going on. In the first case the leader may have little to do but watch things happen. However, it becomes the leader's obligation to fill the void should either of the other two situations develop. The questions appearing in items one through four in Example 10–3 yield a variety of additional information as grist for the deliberative process in which the group is engaged. Item five demonstrates that questions can be a most effective control device for getting the group back on track when they have lost their sense of direction. Item six is an example of how questions may be employed to regulate the participation of people at the meeting and respond to problem participants. Item seven illustrates how questions can be used to summarize and move the group to final action.

Summary is an important discussion tool by itself. The primary purpose of summary is to produce a status report of the discussion. It provides answers to such questions as "What can we agree upon at this point?" "What are the choices we have?" "What are the major advantages and disadvantages of this course of action?" "This is what we know about this matter," or "Here is what we have done so far." Summary is an attempt to pull together in a concise statement seemingly unrelated and random comments or bits of information as a point of departure for further discussion, action, or decision making. As suggested earlier, it may be used several times during the discussion of a single agenda item or a single time when the group members have exchanged enough information to support a decision or action.

EXAMPLE 10-3

Using Questions for a Purpose[8]

Intent of the Question	*Example*
To stimulate thinking and creativity	• Have you given any thought to what this procedure might cost? • We need some ideas! Hasn't anyone had a brainstorm on this? • Is there anything we have forgotten? • Isn't there a simpler or quicker way to do it?
To clarify issues and concerns/build information	• It sounds like the problem is a lack of communication between the two committees; is that correct? • If we take that approach, how many hours of preparation time could be required? • Let me see if I understand; you want us to shoot three twenty-minute spots rather than two of thirty minutes? • I'm not sure everyone understands your point; could you explain a little further?
To reveal motives and hidden agendas	• How do you feel that relates to the question we have been grappling with? • Why do you think we should do it that way?
To explore emotions and feelings about an issue	• Do you think this will offend anyone? • Is this a compromise everyone feels comfortable with? • What are your feelings on this, Jerome?
To keep discussion on track	• That is an important fact, but how does it relate to the problem? • Are there any other questions before we move on to the next item? • Aren't we a little off the subject?
To administer positive or negative feedback	• Do you really think that's a fair appraisal of Marian's position? • If you feel it's that undeserving of consideration, what do you suggest as an alternative? • I think that's a great idea; can you go into a little more detail? • Does everyone feel Burt's suggestion is the best so far?
To move the group toward a decision	• Do you feel we have heard enough information to base a decision on or must we have more testimony? • Is there a consensus on this issue?

DEALING WITH CONFORMITY AND CONFLICT

Conformity and conflict are the two-edged swords of the meeting process. Effective meeting leadership requires that consensus and unanimity be sought, but not as a result of mindless unquestioning conformity. It also requires management of conflict so it yields constructive rather than destructive fallout.

[8]Ibid., pp. 95–119.

Conformity

Groupthink is the term most frequently used to characterize the negative side of conformity. "The term 'groupthink' was coined by Irving Janis to describe a condition of likemindedness which tends to arise in groups that are particularly cohesive."[9] It is characterized by individual unwillingness to make "waves" by offering suggestions, asking questions, or providing critical feedback that runs counter to the general thinking of the group; almost categorical rejection of divergent views; undue concern for harmony even if it means settling on a less suitable course of action; rationalization of the agreed upon course of action as being the best among many; and a high level of commitment to the group decision by all members.

In groups in which members share common objectives, have developed close personal ties, and enjoy good and productive working relationships, you must be constantly on the lookout for symptoms of groupthink. They are most noticeable to outsiders. For this reason it's sometimes helpful to inject new blood into meetings. Other preventive techniques include some of the fundamentals we have already discussed. Search for and urge the group to consider *critically* a full range of alternatives before making decisions. Solicit and reinforce constructive criticism. Discourage the group from making decisions based more on feelings than fact. Use a full range of questions for the purposes cited in Example 10–3. In sum, if you do your job as meeting leader, groupthink will become an endangered species.

Types of Conflict

The effective management of conflict presents a somewhat greater challenge. What thoughts come to your mind when you hear the word *conflict*? You may envision two or more individuals interacting and expressing opposing viewpoints. The way you picture them interacting may run the gamut from polite, logical communication to irrational, heated yelling or, worse yet, violence. Given ample time to develop your thoughts about conflict, you'll likely conclude that it is inevitable when human beings interact and that it can result in positive as well as negative outcomes. This would indeed be a concise and accurate portrayal of the range of behaviors associated with conflict.

Actually, conflict seems quite natural if you remember that people, as opposed to robots, are involved in the kinds of decision-making situations for which meetings are convened. These "individuals" differ considerably in their values, motives, and perceptions of reality. They also

[9]Timm, *Managerial Communication*, p. 181.

differ in the amount of knowledge they have accumulated and in their intellectual ability. It stands to reason that because they are different, the way they process and evaluate information often results in conflict. To have no conflict, therefore, would be unlikely unless a group were afflicted with groupthink; the lack of conflict would suggest a breakdown in the process of searching for and evaluating alternatives. Thus, conflict frequently implies that growth, in a positive sense, is taking place.

What are the sources of conflict? Louis Pondy suggests three: competition for scarce rewards, divergent views on goals and objectives, and the struggle for dominance or autonomy.[10] When rewards are scarce, there will be conflict. The conflict will be more extreme if the rewards or gratifications deal with basic needs, such as food. A conflict situation more likely to occur, would be a meeting at which people representing the interests of different programs competing for scarce resources were to divide up a fixed amount of monies in the form of an operating budget. On the other hand, assume that the reward was nothing more than a simple recognition from a superior for a job well done in the sales field. In this case tangibles such as food or money are not a consideration, so competition among the sales personnel will most likely take a more subtle form.

Another kind of conflict occurs when there is disagreement about the group's goals or objectives. Take, for example, the church group that earmarked a large amount of money for charity but neglected to identify which charity; is it to be a local charity or one halfway around the world? Conflict predictably becomes manifest in comments ranging from, "We have needs right here in our own community" to "It's our responsibility to support the 'have-nots' no matter where they dwell." But the sources of conflict on substantive issues are usually more deeply rooted than mere differences of opinion on goals and objectives. Franklyn Haiman suggests four variations in this kind of conflict.[11]

- *Conflict in meaning*—arises when members of the group use the same term in different ways. These semantic differences make them appear to be in disagreement when actually they are not.
- *Conflict in evidence*—occurs when the facts or expert opinions on which the group might base its decision seem to be in conflict.
- *Conflict in reasoning*—occurs when different people reasoning from the same set of facts arrive at different conclusions.
- *Conflict in values*—occurs when poeple have different fundamental norms.

In any group there also seems to be a natural struggle for dominance or the traditional establishment of a pecking order, regardless of the situation. Whether it is to establish superiority over another individual or control of the entire group, struggle for dominance typically has a debilitating effect on the productivity of the group. Sometimes, the conflict has no apparent substance; it results from some member's desire to be right, to control, or simply to get his or her own way.

[10]See Louis R. Pondy, "Organizational Conflict: Concepts and Models," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, September, 1967, pp. 296–320.

[11]Adapted from Franklyn S. Haiman, *Group Leadership and Democratic Action* (Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin Company, © 1951 renewed 1979), pp. 182–185, used with permission.

Managing and Resolving Conflict

There are several alternative strategies for conflict resolution in meetings. The first is the use of *force*. The supervisor might terminate a dispute between two employees by deciding, "This is the way it's going to be." The resolution of the conflict is made mandatory. Force usually works only in situations where the person in command of the meeting has some power over the disputants by virtue of consent or position. Even then the dispute remains unresolved in a pure sense; it may continue to simmer below the surface with disastrous long-range effects.

The second strategy is that of *arbitration*. In the context of this book we will use the term arbitration to mean commitment into the hands of an individual or a group with the authority to make a final decision (unilaterally or by majority vote) after each person in dispute has had a chance to present fully his or her case. Thus, arbitration is a clear improvement over the use of force because it gives opportunities for preserving and debating the merits of the opposing viewpoints. The disputants agree that they will abide by the decision regardless of outcome. By this definition arbitration is used by any group that attempts to resolve differences through formal voting, an informal show of hands, or voice ballot. This method, like force, does little actually to resolve the differences that gave rise to the conflict in the first place. The participants at the meeting may still be in dispute; and while they may abide by the decision, they may fight it out again, another day.

We will discuss the third conflict resolution strategy at greater length. It is the use of *mediation* or *negotiation* to explore all aspects of the dispute or conflict, look at a full range of alternatives for resolving the conflict, and work toward a mutually agreeable decision. It requires conciliation and cooperation. Its advantage is that it is the only means by which the conflict is actually resolved. With mediation or negotiation there is no winner or loser.

Before exploring the techniques associated with mediation and negotiation, it is important to look at the positive side of conflict. After all, it is necessary to generate a little conflict before there can be anything to resolve. In the plus column are all the reasons meetings are relied upon for decision making and problem solving in the first place. People are brought together to pool their talents and intellectual resources. We assume that the open exchange of ideas, viewpoints, insights, suggestions, and criticism will yield higher quality decisions than if a person acted on his or her own initiative. Constructive disagreement must be a part of this exchange if a group wishes to reach its potential. "Because ideas probably are never more critically examined than when they are attacked and must be defended, disagreement among members (provided it is focused on

issues rather than personalities) can promote more critical thinking. When disagreement is minimized or ignored, important aspects of the problem may be disregarded, and potential flaws in the proposed solution may be overlooked."[12] Thus, promoting reasonable disagreement or conflict is essential in most meetings.

"The key to productive conflict is intragroup trust. . . . Ideally, members should feel free to present their opinion no matter how far that position differs from others."[13] The person leading the meeting plays a major role in establishing this sense of intragroup trust. Variant opinions and ideas must be encouraged, indeed solicited, from the outset of the meeting, so that such input becomes the norm rather than the exception. Responses to remarks of group members must be accepting and respectful rather than being sarcastic and demeaning. Personal attacks must be avoided, controlled, and occasionally reprimanded. Finally, participants must be encouraged to deal in facts and issues rather than personalities.

Once generated, disagreement or conflict must be managed so it will not immobilize the meeting group. Mediation and negotiation skills are essential if conflict is to be managed effectively. The basic principles of mediation and negotiation follow.

ESTABLISH NORMS FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION Just as the meeting leader must set a receptive tone for constructive disagreement, he or she must also establish some informal ground rules for resolving conflict when it occurs. The focus here is on norms other than a reliance on voting or executive decision. They need not be elaborate nor do they need to be explicitly articulated each time meeting participants disagree. But the participants need to know that each party to the dispute will have ample opportunity to state his or her case without interruption. It is also helpful for them to view the person chairing the meeting as a fairly objective third party. Finally, they must realize that personal attacks will not be tolerated.

This sounds like standard operating procedure but, for some obscure reason, people leading meetings seem to abhor intervening in disputes steeped in emotion. Participant A says, "What jerk made that suggestion?" Participant B stands and responds, "This jerk, that's who." Unless the leader discourages the dialogue from the outset, the situation will rapidly worsen. One of us was in a meeting several years ago where two persons were allowed to attack verbally and interrupt one another at will. The meeting was adjourned when things became too hot to handle, and the two parties made a beeline for the parking lot in total accord on one thing—their intent to turn the altercation into fisticuffs. Only through the intervention of a colleague was a physical conflict avoided. This incident occurred because some people deal on an emotional level, attacking personalities rather than addressing content logically. The group leader must not only terminate this dialogue but must also provide an avenue for both participants to save face. Otherwise, the injury to their

[12]Reprinted from Corwin P. King, "The Uses and Abuses of Team Problem Solving," *SAM Advanced Management Journal*, Autumn 1976 (New York: AMACOM, a division of American Management Associations, 1976), p. 35.

[13]Barker, *Groups in Process*, p. 96.

self-respect will permeate any positive steps that might be taken to resolve their differences. The following techniques will help set norms for handling conflict and keeping members' emotions where they ought to be—under control.

The person chairing the meeting must keep a keen lookout for interruptions or personalized criticism. Immediate intervention with "Let's hold it, everybody; I think we should hear both arguments"; a blunt, "Let's stick to the facts, Bill"; or a question, "What is it about Brenda's idea that bothers you?" should serve as adequate notice that fair play and objectivity are the watchwords.

When an inflammatory statement is made, the group leader can respond quickly by rephrasing the remark to make it more acceptable. This censures and discourages further unacceptable comments from the speaker, or anyone else for that matter.

GET TO THE ROOT OF THE CONFLICT To resolve any conflict, the first order of business is to identify its source. Each person needs an opportunity to express himself or herself. However, it is possible that even after they have done so, you may not have a complete picture. Those in dispute may disguise psychologically or emotionally based disagreements. Getting to the root of these disputes requires some probing. "But, Rod, what do you see as the specific disadvantages? You must have some basis for that accusation? What is it?" "Do you have any evidence to support your argument?" These types of questions force people to put up or shut up. They are pressed to offer their comments objectively and factually.

Even if the disagreement is related to the substance of the issue being discussed, more information than initially volunteered by the disputants may be necessary. This can be solicited by supplemental questioning to seek clarifying information, paraphrasing responses to assure common understanding, and periodic summarizing of key points on *both* sides of the dispute.

LOOK FOR AREAS OF AGREEMENT The person attempting to act as mediator should, after getting all the facts on the table, have some framework for forging a compromise solution or eliminating unsupportable positions from further consideration. Three techniques are helpful here.

Identify and point out areas of agreement as a basis for further discussion. If the participants see that they do, in fact, share the same views on some matters, they will be more willing to seek compromise on others. This technique is most effective when the leader appeals to some common value or long-range goal that the parties in dispute share. They will sit down and focus on the means much more readily if they can see some collective advantage or benefit.

Seek early agreement on simple, less contentious issues, postponing more difficult questions. This means addressing differences in increments and building a track record of successful compromise before tackling the truly difficult topics.

When, upon scrutiny, one person's position is found unsupportable, *offer alternative positions* to which he or she may retreat. "One of the basic causes of extrinsic conflict is the need to 'save face.' "[14] When proved wrong, people do not "wish to appear to have been stupid, foolish, illogical, uninformed, unenlightened, [or] misdirected."[15] Rather, they will "(1) persist emotionally in a rationally untenable position, (2) refuse to discuss the matter further," thereby leaving it unresolved, "or (3) find some loophole through which" to "crawl out of the dilemma without losing prestige."[16] The last option provides the leader the opportunity to present a face-saving alternative. The easiest way is to outline the other choices available so they do not sound exactly like those of the opposition. For instance, "If we were to consider postponing serious consideration of a new building (the face-saver's first choice) until funds allowed it and expand current space by acquiring some modular units or rental space (your alternatives), could you support one or the other as a compromise measure?" The face-saver didn't get his or her new building but could retreat to one or two positions with the hope that it might be given thought later.

ENCOURAGE THOSE IN DISAGREEMENT TO OFFER SOLUTIONS OR POSITIONS OF COMPROMISE It is better not to foist solutions or choices on those in disagreement if you don't have to. Questions such as, "Well, what do you see as the solution?" "How can we avoid these problems in the future?" or "You've got some good reasons why this procedure may not work; do you have any suggestions on an alternative?" will usually yield food for collective thought. When the ideas start flowing, they must all be evaluated objectively regardless of apparent merit. To put down any suggestion will just shut off the spigot of compromise.

When all else fails the mediator can offer compromise positions. However, it is best to introduce them with "one possibility is . . ." or "a variation on your proposal would be to . . .," rather than "My thinking on this is" or "It seems like the only option is. . . ." The latter types of statements throw up red flags and reduce the possibility that your suggestions will be considered favorably.

USE DIVERSIONS AND BREAKS IN DISCUSSION When tensions rise or discussion is at an impasse, a break can put meeting participants in an improved and more conciliatory frame of mind. A recess is also helpful if the reason for the inability to gain compromise is the need for additional information. A similar effect can be had by diverting attention to topics other than those about which there is disagreement.

INVITE PARTICIPANTS TO ROLE PLAY This need not be done formally as one might use role playing or role reversal in a therapy group. You can encourage people affirmatively to try to develop an empathetic understanding of the perspectives of others with whom they disagree quite informally by suggesting, "Put yourself in Don's shoes for a minute. Here's a guy who . . ." or "How would you react if you were the one in charge of the budget and people made expenditures without telling you?"

[14]Haiman, *Group Leadership and Democratic Action*, p. 189.

[15]Ibid.

[16]Ibid.

USE HUMOR A little humor interjected with good timing is a tremendous elixir for disagreements that seem to be getting nowhere. It shatters anxiety and allows people to start back in on the problem having enjoyed something in harmony.

Again, it is important to stress that the leadership offered during any attempt to resolve differences between meeting participants should be encouraging, objective, and conciliatory. The leader should conduct the process impartially, like a respected referee in a football game. Displays of partiality during the conflict resolution process will leave the losing faction bitter, frustrated, and, possibly, unwilling to go along with the final decision. They also muddy the waters for future deliberations. If you attempt to mediate a dispute and are needled or attacked verbally, it is imperative to avoid an emotional response. To do otherwise would give those on one side of the disagreement the impression that you are on the other.

EXAMPLE 13-2

Meeting Effectiveness Assessment

	No	Partially	Fully
Were the objectives of the meeting worthwhile?			
from your perspective?	☐	☐	☐
from an organizational perspective?	☐	☐	☐
from the meeting leader's perspective?	☐	☐	☐
from the other participants' perspectives?	☐	☐	☐
Were hidden agendas served by the meeting worthwhile?	☐	☐	☐
Were the objectives of the meeting accomplished?	☐	☐	☐
Was the participants' time used in a purposeful manner?	☐	☐	☐
Were the costs of the meeting in money and time justified by the progress, products, decisions, or actions of the meeting?	☐	☐	☐

EXAMPLE 15-1

The Committee Planner

Committee Name _____

Chairperson _____

Subject matter jurisdiction _____

_____

_____

_____

Purposes _____

_____

_____

_____

Products _____

_____

_____

_____

Timetable/deadlines _____

_____

Resources _____

_____

_____

_____

Special instructions _____

_____

_____

_____

Reporting to _____

_____

EXAMPLE 9-1

Meeting Behavior Awareness Scale

Consider each of the behaviors commonly observed in meeting settings. Realistically assess the frequency with which you display such behaviors and would like to change them, using the following scale:

1 = never display the behavior
2 = sometimes display the behavior
3 = often display the behavior

This self-test should give you some clues about where you need improvement.

	Present Rating	Desired Rating
Mission/task-oriented behavior (track one)		
1. Prepares for meetings	_____	_____
2. Clarifies group goals/objectives, decisions, or questions	_____	_____
3. Aids in decision making and priority setting	_____	_____
4. Helps keep the group on task	_____	_____
5. Seeks ideas, information, and perspectives	_____	_____
6. Provides ideas, information, perspectives	_____	_____
7. Assists in objectively evaluating decisional alternatives	_____	_____
8. Summarizes progress and issues	_____	_____
9. Helps resolve conflicts/disputes	_____	_____
10. Carries out assignments	_____	_____
11. Listens carefully to others	_____	_____
12. Looks for and responds appropriately to nonverbal cues	_____	_____
People-oriented behavior (track two)		
1. Encourages a sense of group purpose	_____	_____
2. Creates opportunities for and encourages others to participate	_____	_____
3. Entertains the comments of others in a fair, open, and respectful manner	_____	_____
4. Discourages domination by others	_____	_____
5. Allows people to express their feelings	_____	_____
6. Provides positive feedback	_____	_____
7. Blocks personal attacks and other counterproductive behavior	_____	_____
Obstructionist behavior		
1. Offers unjustified/unsubstantiated criticism	_____	_____
2. Limits own participation	_____	_____
3. Inhibits the participation of others by dominating	_____	_____
4. Indulges in war stories and discussion off the subject	_____	_____
5. Engages in side conversations	_____	_____
6. Belittles the contributions of others or attacks them personally	_____	_____
7. Shows off	_____	_____
8. Indulges in excessive humor	_____	_____

How To Survive THE NEW RACISM

Current efforts to beat back Black progress call for a renewed commitment to excellence and organization

By Charles Whitaker

CLOAKED in the transparent guise of individualism and disingenuously expressed as the desire to achieve a "color-blind" society, American racism is again rearing its ugly head and gnawing at the foundation of the many victories secured in the civil rights era.

Today, due partly to a faltering economy and the race-baiting tactics of leaders in the new right wing, droves of White Americans are not only distancing themselves from the legislation and programs effected to redress centuries of discrimination, they are adopting a reactionary posture that can only be described as anti-Black.

Displays of open hostility towards Blacks are among the troubling signs indicating the return of a climate of racial intolerance. In most instances, however, the new racism is manifest in more insidious ways.

"What we are seeing today is an absolute retreat from the politics and policies of fairness that emerged from the Civil Rights Movement," says Julius L. Chambers, director-counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund. "We have returned to an atmosphere in which racism is not only tolerated, it's encouraged."

The "new racism" is the term some observers use to describe the recent attacks—some subtle, some not-so-subtle—on Black progress. It is evident on predominantly White college campuses, where Black students and faculty face mounting hostilities. It is evident in corporate suites, where Black executives are butting their heads against glass ceilings that prohibit their advancement. It is evident in national polls that indicate White Americans—despite the overwhelming evidence of their individual prejudices—continue to labor under the mistaken belief that discrimination has been completely eradicated. And it is most evident in the nation's neighborhoods, where resistance to integration still runs deep.

Of course, there is nothing particularly novel about the attitudes that have given rise to these modern manifestations of racism. What makes racism today different, and some say so insidious, is its generally covert nature. The use of incendiary code words, such as "political correctness" and "reverse discrimination," has enabled the forces of bigotry to effectively dismantle the civil rights agenda while preserving the illusion of racial tolerance.

"These subterranean attacks on African-Americans and programs related to African-Americans are a direct result of the fact that moral leadership in the form of indignation about these as-

 Continued on Page 108

Hate groups, such as the Ku Klux Klan (left), while experiencing some humiliating and costly legal defeats in the 1980s, have also gained some closeted middle-class sympathizers, largely due to the ravages of the current economic recession. Minorities and programs designed to help minorities have become the scapegoats for the domestic failures of the Reagan and Bush administrations, some observers say.

THE NEW RACISM *Continued*

saults is fundamentally absent in this country right now," says Bruce R. Hare, professor of sociology and chairman of the Department of African-American Studies at Syracuse University. "It reflects the fact that we are in a period of economic strain, and our leadership has allowed African-Americans to be used as scapegoats to divert attention from the administration's inability to address the domestic problems of the day."

Because racism today has taken such furtive yet virulent forms, many say that Black Americans must work harder than ever to develop strategies for combating it.

The best strategy of all, some say, is the one that has enabled Black Americans to triumph in spite of generations of oppression—the pursuit and maintenance of personal and professional excellence. In this era, when liberalism is no longer in fashion, Blacks, whether they are students, attorneys, or file clerks, must continue to work twice as hard to get ahead.

"We cannot afford, at this critical time in history, to be mediocre," says Arthur Fletcher, chairman of the Commission on Civil Rights. "We must commit ourselves to working harder than ever to achieve the excellence that will make our participation crucial to the economic survival of this country."

Yet Fletcher warns that our goal is not social acceptance by Whites, which he describes as "fruitless."

"Those of us who are reasonably well-educated and have reached a certain position in this society still find that we are victims of discrimination," he says. "So striving for social acceptance is not the remedy for racism. We need to devise new strategies and tactics that will enable us to take control of our communities."

Fletcher's words are echoed by a variety of people who offer similar advice for coping in the new climate of subtle bias and veiled bigotry. For example, in corporate America, where hordes of young Black executives have been admitted but not fully accepted by the powerful members of the "old boys' network," there is a sense that Blacks must adopt a more proactive stance to guard against being fired and to improve their chances for promotion.

"This is a good and bad time for Blacks in the corporate world," says Derryl L. Reed, president of the National Assn. of Black MBAs and an assistant vice president for the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Assn. of America. "On the one hand you probably have the largest corps of well-educated, highly skilled Black executives ever coming out of business schools and working their way into management right now. At the same time, we're seeing a lessening of opportunity for those same men and women. Because of the current environment of corporate downsizing, mergers and acquisitions, their jobs are being eliminated. And with the lack of support from the federal government with regard to discrimination suits, companies are no longer as inclined to seek out or promote minority managers."

Consequently, Reed and others say that Blacks in the corporate arena must not only work hard at their jobs, they must work equally hard monitoring and developing career strategies that will help them head off racist attacks.

For example, it is vitally important, says Reed, for Black managers to keep accurate documentation of their workload and the assignments they've successfully completed. The material will be useful when faced with a supervisor suspected of being a racist or with the prospect of being fired.

"It's not enough to do your job well," Reed says. "You have to market yourself within the company and outside of it. You have to network and establish relationships with other people in other divisions. And you have to keep your eyes and your ear to the ground."

Others, such as Floyd and Jacqueline Dickens, authors of *The Black Manager: Making It In The Corporate World*, say that the best way to cope with racism in the corporate environment is to develop and maintain a strong sense of self-confidence. "What we tell minorities," says Floyd Dickens, president of 21st Century Management Services, a consulting firm through which he and his wife conduct seminars for Black and White managers from many Fortune 500 companies, "is to have the confidence to channel their anger and emotions at racist situations into strategies that will enhance their job performance and place them in line for promotion."

Jacqueline Dickens adds: "Minorities need to feel a sense of real ownership in the organizations they work for. That takes confidence, too. However, once you feel that sense of ownership—that sense that you're not a stepchild in this organization, that you have something valuable to contribute—you're better able to constructively deal with the racism that is prevalent in much of corporate America."

Ironically, it is on America's predominantly White college campuses where some of the best models for coping with modern racism present themselves. As in the turbulent 1960s and early '70s, college campuses have once again become a hotbed of contentious opinions, largely focusing on race.

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At the University of Mississippi, unidentified vandals set fire to the Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity House in 1988. Phi Beta Sigma was the first Black fraternity to inhabit a house on the university's all-White "Fraternity Row." Similar race-related incidents of intimidation and confrontation have occurred at colleges and universities across the country. But Black students have responded with protests and demonstrations that have leveraged important concessions from their administrations.

THE NEW RACISM *Continued*

Tensions are high. Conservative ideologues maintain that their right to air their pejorative views about African-American studies and other non-Eurocentric courses is being stifled in favor of what they term "politically correct" thinking. At many major universities, including Brown, Georgetown, Yale, the University of Michigan and the University of Illinois, incidents of Black students being verbally taunted and harassed have risen dramatically in the past five years.

"The campuses are pretty much a reflection of the society as a whole," says Dr. Reginald Wilson, senior scholar for the American Council on Education. "The Reagan-Bush decade has been characterized by antagonism toward minorities and such heinous acts as the taking of Dr. [Martin Luther] King's words and twisting them to suggest that we now have a 'color-blind' society. As though 400 years of racism could be wiped away by 20 years of affirmative action. But because of the tone set by the administration, we have seen this increase in the number of racial incidents on campus."

Black students have responded to this aggression with major demonstrations that have leveraged important concessions from their administrations, including increased support of African-American studies departments, commitments to increase the number of Black faculty and staff, the establishment of cultural sensitivity sessions as part of freshman orientation, and the adoption of harsh disciplinary measures for students found guilty of racial intimidation.

Though virtually everyone agrees that the students have done wonders to effect such changes, some academicians say that other strategies for handling campus racism can still be developed. Some suggest, for example, that Black students and faculty form coalitions with similar groups that are fighting against the reactionary tide. "It's that kind of collaboration that will keep minority issues at the forefront of the university agenda," Wilson says.

Dr. Charles Moody, vice provost for minority affairs at the University of Michigan, says Black people must also do a better job of refuting the conservative notion that all Black professionals and students are unqualified beneficiaries of affirmative action. "There is power in definitions, and we cannot allow affirmative action to be defined as a badge of dishonor," he says. "We must also let it be known that not every student of color is a special admit, and not every White student has a 4.00 grade-point average and 1,600 [score] on the SAT."

There is perhaps no area of American life where the country's increased racial tensions are more apparent than in its housing patterns. Though integrated housing took a few dramatic leaps forward in the late 1960s and early '70s, the progress stalled completely by the mid-'70s.

"The incidents aren't as prevalent as they were maybe 10 or 20 years ago," says Kale Williams, executive director of The Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities, a watchdog group that monitors housing patterns in the Chicago area, "but we still hear about some of the intimidation and harassment that occur when Black families move into an all-White neighborhood. There's still the occasional cross burning. There's still residual fears about lowered property values when Blacks move into the neighborhood."

Fair housing advocates and others say the only way to combat the fears and hate crimes is head-on. "You have to organize the community, get your right-thinking neighbors and the law enforcement officials involved," says Jerre Henry, director of Good Neighbors, Inc., a Boston group designed to spur greater participation in racially changing neighborhoods. "You can't just sit back like the hapless victim and hope something is done about it. You have to take the initiative."

If one theme resounds through the comments about fighting racism in the '90s, it is the charge to take positive steps to counter the current racist assault.

"Thanks to the Freedom Movement, we are in an infinitely better position than we were 20 years ago," says Arthur Fletcher. "We have hard-won voting rights legislation. We have more Black elected officials than we've had in the history of the nation. We have highly educated professionals who graduate from the finest schools in the country. Now it's up to us to use these tools that so many people fought and died for to our advantage. The things are in place. If we're smart enough and bold enough to use them, we'll have the control of the wealth in our communities and we won't have to worry about racism."

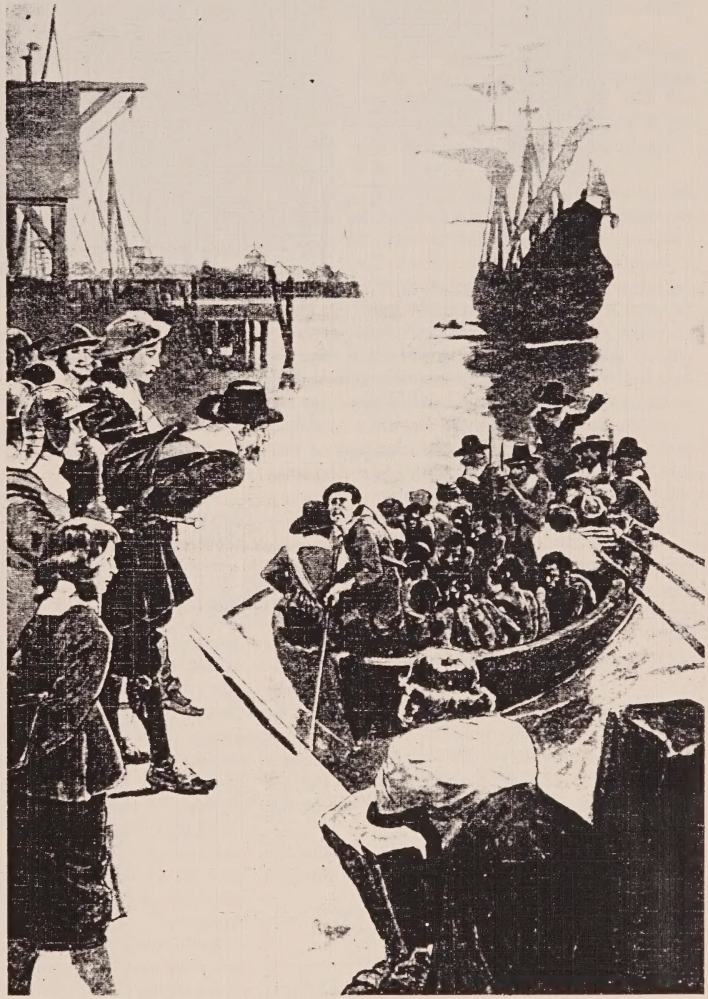
10 Most Dramatic Events In African-American History

By Lerone Bennett Jr.

1. The Black Coming

A YEAR before the arrival of the celebrated *Mayflower*, 244 years before the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation, 335 years before *Brown* vs. *Board of Education*, a big, bluff-bowed ship sailed up the river James and landed the first generation of African-Americans at Jamestown, Va.

Nobody knows the hour or the date of the official Black coming. But there is not the slightest doubt about the month. John Rolfe, who betrayed Pochohontas and experimented with tobacco, was there, and he said in a letter that the ship arrived "about the latter end of August" in 1619 and that it "brought not anything but 20 and odd Negroes." Concerning which the most charitable thing to say is that John Rolfe was probably pulling his boss' leg. For no ship ever called at an American port with a more important cargo. In the hold of that ship, in a manner of speaking, was the whole gorgeous panorama of Black America, was jazz and the spirituals and the black gold that made American capitalism possible.* Bird was there and Bigger and King and Malcolm and millions of other Xs and crosses, along with Mahalia singing, Duke Ellington composing, Gwendolyn Brooks rhyming and Michael Jordan slam-dunking. It was all there, illegible and inevitable, on that day. A man with eyes would have seen it and would have announced to his contemporaries that this ship heralds the beginning of the first Civil War and the second.



First group of Africans in English America landed at Jamestown, Va., in August 1619, a year before the arrival of the *Mayflower*.

As befitting a herald of fate, the ship was nameless, and mystery surrounds it to this day. Where did this ship come from? From the high seas, where the crew robbed a Spanish vessel of a cargo of Africans bound for the West Indies. The captain "ptended," John Rolfe noted, that he needed food, and he offered to exchange his cargo for "victualle." The deal was arranged. Antoney, Pedro, Isabella and 17 other Africans with Spanish names stepped ashore, and the history of Africans in America began.

And it began, contrary to what almost all texts say, not in slavery but in freedom. For there is indisputable evidence that most of the first Black immigrants, like most of the first White immigrants, were held in indentured servitude for a number of years and then freed. During a transitional period of some 40 years, the first Black immigrants held real property, sued in court and accumulated pounds and plantations.

This changed drastically in the sixth decade of the century when the White founding fathers, spurred on by greed and the unprotected status of African immigrants, enacted laws that reduced most Africans to slavery. And so, some 40 years after the Black coming, Black and White crossed a fatal threshhold, and the echo of that decision will reverberate in the corridors of Black and White history forever.

**The Shaping of Black America*

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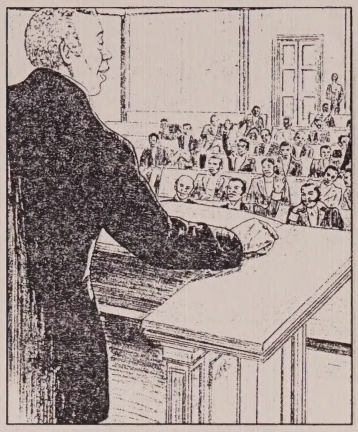

First Black convention met at Philadelphia's Bethel AME Church on September 20, 1830, with Bishop Richard Allen in the chair.

2. The Founding of Black America

WHEN, on a Sunday in November 1786, the little band of Black Christians arrived at Philadelphia's St. George's Methodist Episcopal Church, the sexton pointed to the gallery. The Blacks paused and then started up the rickety stairs with downcast eyes and heavy hearts. To the leaders of this group, Richard Allen and Absalom Jones, this was the ultimate indignity—to be shunted from the first floor to the gallery in a church Black men had helped build.

The group had barely reached the top of the stairs when a voice from the pulpit said, "Let us pray." Without thinking, the men plopped down where they were—in the *front* of the gallery. Allen was praying as hard as he could when he heard loud voices. He opened his eyes and saw a white sexton trying to pull Absalom Jones from his knees.

"You must get up; you must not kneel down here!" the White sexton said.

"Wait until the prayer is over," Jones replied.

The voices echoed through the church, and people looked up and beheld the incredible scene of a Black Christian and a White Christian wrestling in the house of the Lord over the color of God's word.

"Get up!" the sexton said. "Get up!"

"Wait until the prayer is over," Jones replied wearily, "and I will not trouble you any more."

Four or five White Christians rushed to the sexton's aid, and the struggle spread over the gallery. Before the issue was resolved, the prayer ended. The Black men stood up then and, without a word, streamed out of the church in the first mass demonstration in Black American history.

Richard Allen added a mournful postscript:

". . . And they were no more plagued by us in the church."

They were no more plagued by Blacks in a lot of places. For the Philadelphia demonstration was the focal point of a national movement that created the foundations of Black America. On April 12, 1787, Richard Allen and Absalom Jones created the Free African Society which DuBois called "the first wavering step of a people toward a more organized social life."

Similar societies were formed in most major Northern cities. And on this foundation rose an intricate structure of independent Black churches, schools and cultural organizations. The movement climaxed in the 1820s and 1830s with the founding of Freedom's Journal, the first Black newspaper, and the convening of the first national Black convention.

3. Nat Turner's War

GOD was speaking, Nat Turner said later.

There was, he remembered, thunder and lightning and a "loud voice" in the sky. And the voice spoke to him, telling him to take up the yoke and fight against the serpent "for the time was fast approaching when the first should be last and the last should be first."

Nat Turner was numbered among the last. And although he was a slave in Southampton County, Va., it would be said of him later that he "made an impact upon the people of his section as great as that of John C. Calhoun or Jefferson Davis." A mystic with blood on his mind and a preacher with vengeance on his lips, he was an implacable foe of slaveholders. He had believed since he was a child that God had set him aside for some great purpose. And he decided now that God was calling him to rise up and "slay my enemies with their own weapons."

Major slave revolt erupted in Southampton County, Va., on August 21, 1831, under the leadership of Nat Turner.

To this end, Turner, who was about 30 years old, chose four disciples and set his face towards Jerusalem, the county seat of Southampton.

On Sunday morning, Aug. 21, 1831, the disciples gathered on the banks of Cabin Pond on the property of Joseph Travis, who had married the widow of Turner's last master and who had therefore inherited Turner and death. Nat, who appreciated the value of a delayed and dramatic entrance, appeared suddenly late in the afternoon and announced that they would strike that night, beginning at the home of his master and proceeding from house to house, killing every man, woman and child.

At 1 a.m., Nat Turner and his army crept through the woods to the home of the luckless Joseph Travis. They were seven men, armed with one hatchet and a broadax. Twenty-four hours later, they would be seventy and at least fifty-seven Whites would be dead.

When, on Monday morning, the first bodies were discovered, a nameless dread seized the citizens. Men, women and children fled to the woods and hid under the leaves until soldiers and sailors arrived from Richmond and Norfolk. Some Whites left the county; others left the state.

Defeated in an engagement near Jerusalem, Turner went into hiding and was not captured until six weeks later. On Nov. 11, 1831, the short Black man called the Prophet was hanged in a field near the courthouse. Before climbing the gallows, he made one last prophecy, saying there would be a storm after his execution and that the sun would refuse to shine. There was, in fact, a storm in Jerusalem on that day, but Turner was not talking about the weather—he was predicting a major disturbance in the American psyche. The storm he saw came in the generation of crisis that his act helped precipiate.

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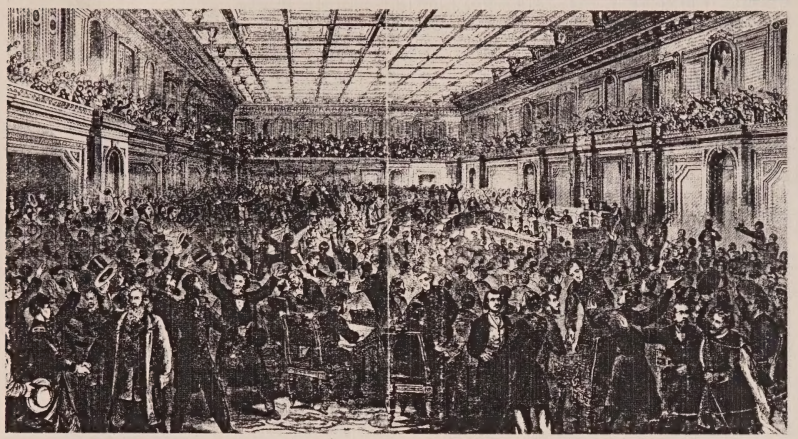
4. Free At Last!



Passage of 13th Amendment, ending slavery, was greeted by thunderous ovations in House of Representatives on Jan. 31, 1865.

TO Felix Haywood, who was there, it was the Time of Glory when men and women walked "on golden clouds."

To Frederick Douglass, it was a down-payment on the redemption of the American soul.

To Sister Winny in Virginia, to Jane Montgomery in Louisiana, to Ed Bluff in Mississippi, to Black people all over the South and all over America, it was the Time of Jubilee, the wild, happy, sad, mocking, tearful, fearful time of the unchaining of the bodies of Black folks. And the air was sweet with song.

Free at last!
Free at last!
Thank God Almighty!
We're free at last.

W.E.B. Dubois was not there, but he summed the whole thing up in phrases worthy of the ages. It was all, he said, "foolish, bizarre, and tawdry. Gangs of dirty Negroes howling and dancing; poverty-stricken ignorant laborers mistaking war, destruction, and revolution for the mystery of the free human soul; and yet to these Black folk it was the Apocalypse." And he added:

"All that was Beauty, all that was Love, all that was Truth, stood on the top of these mad mornings and sang with the stars. A great human sob shrieked in the wind, and tossed its tears upon the sea—free, free, free."

Contrary to the common view, the emancipation of Blacks didn't happen at one time or even in one place. It started with the first shot fired at Fort Sumter. It continued during the war and in the Jubilee summer of 1865, *and it has not been completed.* For the slaves, who created the foundation of American wealth, never received the 40 acres of land that would have made freedom meaningful.

It was in this milieu that African-Americans embarked on a road called freedom. As the road twisted and turned, doubling back on itself, their enemies and their problems multiplied. But they endured, and endure.

Booker T. Washington vs. W.E.B. DuBois

Booker T. Washington, Tuskegee Institute president, and W.E.B. DuBois (r.), scholar and protest leader, were central figures in strategy debate.

THERE was a big parade in Atlanta on Wednesday, Sept. 18, 1895, and a huge crowd gathered in the Exposition Building at the Cotton States Exposition for the opening speeches. Several Whites spoke and then former Gov. Rufus Bullock introduced "Professor Booker T. Washington." The 39-year-old president of Tuskegee Institute moved to the front of the platform and started speaking to the segregated audience. Within 10 minutes, reporter James Creelman wrote, "the multitude was in an uproar of enthusiasm—handkerchiefs were waved . . . hats were tossed into the air. The fairest women of Georgia stood up and cheered."

What was the cheering about?

Metaphors mostly—and words millions of Whites wanted to hear. Washington told Blacks: "Cast down your buckets where you are." To Whites, he offered the same advice: "Cast down your bucket [among] the most patient, faithful, law-abiding and unresentful people the world has seen . . . ."

Suddenly, he flung his hand aloft, with the fingers held wide apart.

"In all things purely social," he said, "we can be as separate as the fingers, yet [he balled the fingers into a fist] one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress."

The crowd came to its feet, yelling.

Washington's "Atlanta Compromise" speech made him famous and set the tone for race relations for some 20 years. One year after his speech, the Supreme Court rounded a fateful fork, endorsing in *Plessy* vs. *Ferguson* the principle of "separate but equal."

Washington's refusal to make a direct and open attack on Jim Crow and his implicit acceptance of segregation brought him into conflict with W.E.B. DuBois and a group of Black militants who organized the germinal Niagara Movement. At its first national meeting at Harpers Ferry in 1906, the Niagara militants said, "We claim for ourselves every single right that belongs to a freeborn American, political, civil, and social; and until we get these rights we will never cease to protest and assail the ears of America."

So saying, the Niagara militants laid the foundation for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People which merged the forces of Black militancy and White liberalism.

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6. The Great Migration

Migration to Northern cities by individuals and families changed the racial profile of Black and White America.

HISTORY does not always come with drums beating and flags flying.

Sometimes it comes in on a wave of silence.

Sometimes it whispers.

It was like that in the terrible days of despair that preceded the unprecedented explosion of hope and movement that is called The Great Migration.

This event, which was the largest internal migration in American history and one of the central events of African-American history, started in the cracks of history, in the minds and moods of the masses of Blacks, who were reduced to the status of semi-slaves in the post-Reconstruction period. Pushed back toward slavery by lynchings, segregation and the sharecropping systems, they turned around within themselves and decided that there had to be another way and another and better place. The feeling moved, became a mood, an imperative, a command. Without preamble, without a plan, without leadership, the people began to move, going from the plantation to Southern cities, going from there to the big cities of the North. There, they found jobs in wartime industries and sent letters to a cousin or an aunt or sister or brother, saying: Come! And they came, hundreds and hundreds of thousands. The first wave (300,000) came between 1910 and 1920, followed by a second wave (1,300,000) between 1920 and 1930, and third (500,000) and fourth (2,500,000) waves, even larger, in the '30s and '40s.

In the big cities of the North, Blacks emancipated themselves politically and economically and created the foundation of contemporary Black America.

7. Brown vs. Board of Education

NAACP Counsel Thurgood Marshall led legal campaign that ended segregation. He later became the first Black Supreme Court justice.

THE marshal's voice was loud and clear.

"Oyez! Oyez! Oyez! All persons having business before the Honorable, the Supreme Court of the United States, are admonished to draw near and give their attention, for the Court is now sitting."

The marshal paused and intoned the traditional words:

"God save the United States and this Honorable Court!"

It was high noon on Monday, May 17, 1954, and the Supreme Court was crammed to capacity with spectators. Among the dozen or so Blacks present was Thurgood Marshall, chief counsel of the NAACP, who leaned forward in expectation.

Cases from four states (South Carolina, Virginia, Delaware, Kansas) and the District of Columbia were before the Court, which had been asked by Marshall and his associates to overturn the *Plessy* vs. *Ferguson* decision and declare segregation in public schools unconstitutional. All America awaited the long-expected decision which would come on a Monday. But which Monday? No one knew, and there was no sign on the faces of the justices that the issue was going to be settled on this day.

The Court disposed of routine business and announced decisions in several boring cases involving the sale of milk and the picketing of retail stores. Then Chief Justice Earl Warren picked up a document and said in a firm, quiet voice: "I have for announcement the judgment and opinion of the Court in No. 1—*Oliver Brown et al. v. Board of Education of Topeka*. It was 12:52 p.m. A shiver ran through the courtroom, and bells started ringing in press rooms all over the world.

Warren held the crowd in suspense, reviewing the history of the cases. Then, abruptly, he came to the heart of the matter:

"Does segregation of children in public schools solely on the basis of race, even though the physical facilities and other "tangible" factors may be equal, deprive the children of the minority group of equal educational opportunities?" Warren paused and said: "We believe that it does." The decision was unanimous: 9-0.

The words raced across the country and were received by different people according to their different lights. Southern diehards like Herman Talmadge issued statements of defiance and promised a generation of litigation, but the implications of the decision were so enormous that many Americans were shocked into silence and wonder. In Farmville, Va., a 16-year-old student named Barbara Trent burst into tears when her teacher announced the decision. "We went on studying history," she said later, "but things weren't the same and will never be the same again."

 Continued on Page 114

8. Montgomery and the Freedom Movement

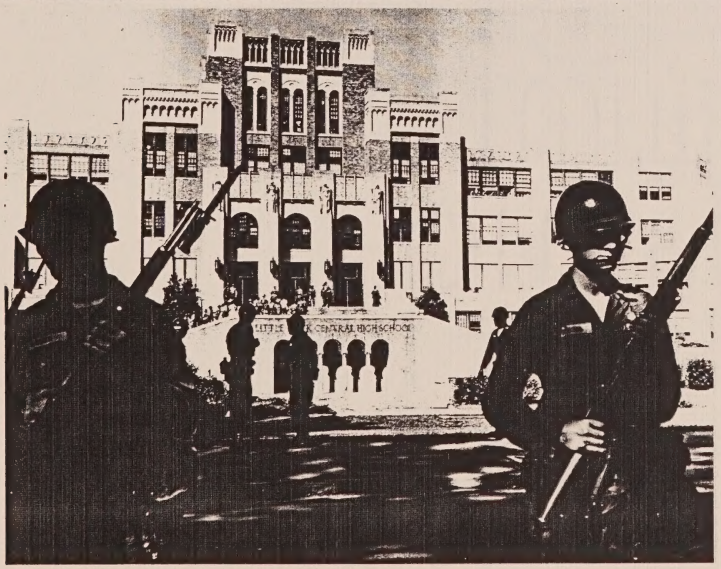
Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King Jr. played key roles in Montgomery Bus Boycott.

IT was a quiet, peaceful day in Montgomery, Ala., the Cradle of the Confederacy—but it was unseasonably hot for December 1.

The Cleveland Avenue bus rolled through Court Square, where Blacks were auctioned in the days of the Confederacy, and braked to a halt in front of the Empire Theater. There was nothing special about the bus or the day; neither the driver nor the passengers realized that a revolution was about to begin that would turn America and the South upside down.

Six Whites boarded the bus at the Empire Theater, and the driver stormed to the rear and ordered the foremost Blacks to get up and give their seats to the White citizens. This was an ancient custom, sanctioned by the peculiar mores of the South, and it excited no undue comment. Three Blacks got up immediately, but Rosa Parks, a mild-mannered seamstress in rimless glasses, kept her seat. For this act of defiance, she was arrested. Local leaders called a one-day bus boycott on Monday, Dec. 5, 1955, to protest the arrest. The one-day boycott stretched out to 381 days; the 381 days changed the face and heart of Black America, creating a new leader (Martin Luther King Jr.), and a new movement. There then followed in quick succession a series of movements (the Sit-ins and Freedom Rides) and dramatic events (Birmingham, Selma, Watts, the March on Washington) that constituted Black America's finest hour and one of the greatest moments in the history of the Republic.

9. Little Rock



Armed U.S. troops escorted Black students to Central High School in Little Rock, Ark.

THE GIANT C-119 flying boxcars circled the field, like grim birds.

One by one, they glided into the Little Rock, Ark., airport and debouched paratroopers in full battle gear. There were, in all, more than 1,000 soldiers, Black and White; and they were in Little Rock to enforce the orders of a federal court. For the first time since the Reconstruction era, the United States of America was deploying federal troops to defend the rights of Black Americans.

Escorted by city police cars, a convoy of olive-drab jeeps and trucks sped to Central High School where a howling mob had prevented the enrollment of nine Black students. The troops deployed on the double to block all entrances to the schools, and signalmen strung telephone lines and set up command posts.

Wednesday morning, Sept. 25, 1957, dawned bright and clear, and nine Black teenagers gathered at the ranch-style home of Daisy Bates, president of the Arkansas NAACP. At 8:50 a.m., there was a rumble of heavy wheels. The teenagers rushed to the window.

"The streets were blocked off," Daisy Bates recalled later. "The soldiers closed ranks . . . Oh! It was beautiful. And the attitude of the children at that moment: the respect they had. I could hear them saying, 'For the first time in my life I truly feel like an American.' I could see it in their faces: Somebody cares for me—*America cares.*"

At 9:45, U.S. soldiers with drawn bayonets escorted six Black females and three Black males into Central High School, and the Rev. Dunbar H. Ogden, president of the Greater Little Rock Ministerial Association, said: "This may be looked back upon by future historians as the turning point—for good—of race relations in this country."

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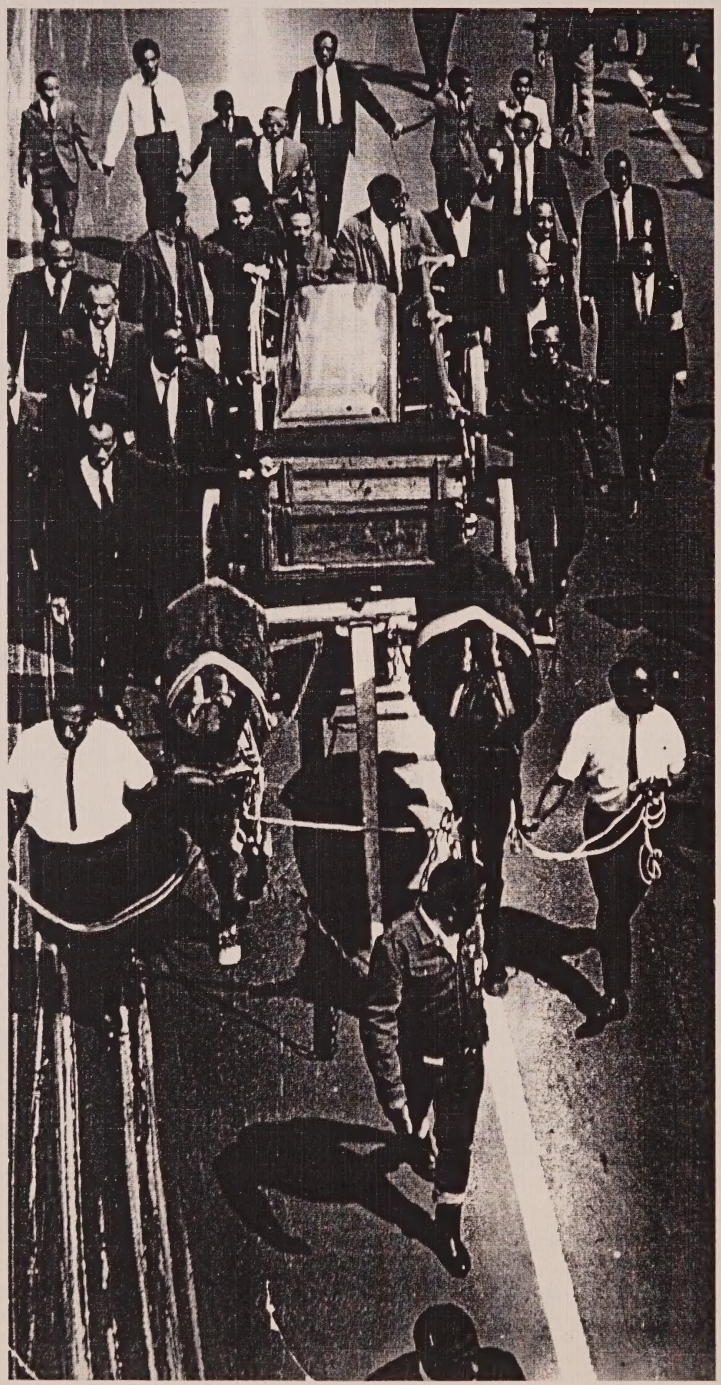
10. Triumph of the Spirit



THERE had never been a moment like this one.

Time stopped.

Everything stopped.

And every man and woman living at that terrible time would be able to tell you until the end of their time what they were doing and where they were on Thursday, April 4, 1968, when word came that Martin Luther King Jr. had been assassinated on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tenn.

The response in Black and White America was tumultuous. Performances, plays, meetings, baseball games were cancelled, and men and women walked aimlessly through the streets, weeping.

There were tears, rivers of tears, and there was also blood. For Black communities exploded, one after another, like firecrackers on a string. Some 46 persons were killed in uprisings in 126 cities, and federal troops were mobilized to put down rebellions in Chicago, Baltimore and Washington, D.C.

To counteract this fury, and to express their sorrow, Americans of all races and creeds joined forces in an unprecedented tribute to a Black American. President Lyndon B. Johnson declared a national day of mourning and ordered U.S. flags to fly at half-mast over U.S. installations at home and abroad. On the day of the funeral—Tuesday, April 9—more than 200,000 mourners followed King's coffin, which was carried through the streets of Atlanta on a wagon, borne by two Georgia mules.

Eighteen years later, the spirit and the truth of Martin Luther King Jr. triumphed when he became the second American citizen (with George Washington) to be celebrated in a personal national holiday.

Huge crowd followed coffin of Martin Luther King Jr. in Atlanta on April 9, 1968. 18 years later, he was honored with national holiday.

An Honest Look At BLACK GAYS AND LESBIANS

By Alvin F. Poussaint, M.D.
Associate Professor of Psychiatry
Harvard Medical School

Lately, they have "come out of the closet" in increasing numbers

SOME people fear and scorn, others tolerate homosexuals, but few understand and welcome them as equal partners in African-American society. Most of us have laughed at Eddie Murphy pretending to be a swishing drag queen. Black comedians rely on stereotypes of Black gays and lesbians as a ready source of

Phil Wilson, co-chair of the Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Forum in Los Angeles, feels that Black gays can avoid rejection by the Black community only if they are not too obvious about their gay orientation. At right, Venus Medina, a project officer at the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, says that most Black lesbians identify as Black women first and lesbians second. Medina is a 30-year-old mother of two.

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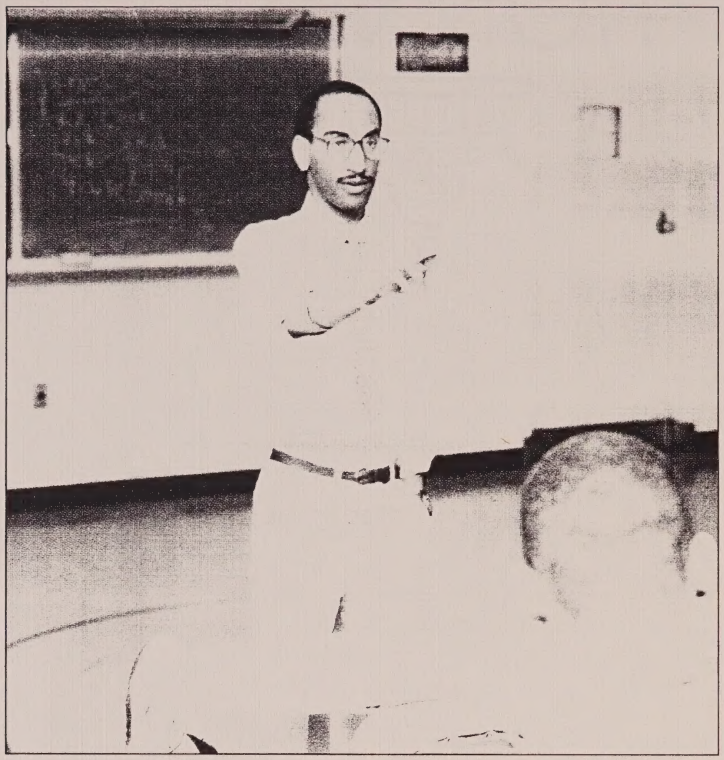

Craig Harris, an AIDS educator at the Gay Male Health Crisis Center in New York, says that the Black community frequently perceives Black gays as part of its problems, along with such social ills as crime and poverty.

Dr. Marjorie J. Hill, a clinical psychologist and director of the new York City Mayor's Office for the Lesbian and Gay Community, feels that the AIDS epidemic has resulted in increased irrational fear and repression of gays in the Black community.

AN HONEST LOOK *Continued*

unflattering portrayals, adding to the common misconception that homosexuals are concentrated primarily in the theater and arts.

A gay presence exists within most, if not all, of our institutions, including sports, the church and the armed services. "People should realize that the Black gay community is not monolithic. There is extraordinary diversity among us that mimics the heterosexual world," says Craig Harris, AIDS educator at the Gay Male Health Crisis Center in New York City.

How many African-American gays and lesbians are there? For obvious reasons, no one knows for sure. The data on White homosexuality that Dr. Alfred Kinsey reported more than 35 years ago may apply to Blacks as well: 4 percent of White males were exclusively homosexual, 13 percent were predominantly gay, and 13 percent expressed erotic feelings for males but did nothing about them. Figures for females were about one-third those of males. The important point is that while gays and lesbians are—and always have been—a significant part of the Black community, they have come "out of the closet" in increasing numbers, forcing "straight" men and women to take notice. Many Black women in America's major urban centers, including New York, Chicago, Washington, D.C., and Atlanta, bemoan the fact that finding "a good Black man" for the purpose of marriage or a committed relationship has become increasingly difficult, if not impossible. Justifiably or not, they blame this situation on what they perceive as a rapidly increasing number of upwardly mobile-looking, educated Black males who can be seen in upscale neighborhoods living obviously gay lifestyles.

Homosexual behavior is practiced in nearly all societies, many of which consider it normal. In parts of Africa it can be a culturally accepted interaction. The suggestion that White Europeans introduced homosexuality to Africans and African-Americans cannot be substantiated. There is no "cause" for homosexuality, which is part of the range of human experience. From the psychiatric standpoint, homosexuality is *different* from heterosexuality, but it is no longer considered *deviant*. Whether a person is attracted to the opposite sex or to one's own seems to be deeply rooted in one's personality, perhaps as inborn as height or hair curl. Some psychologists argue that

 Continued on Page 130

homosexuals' sense of identification. While some Black lesbians and gays identify primarily with the gay community and others identify primarily with Blacks, the gay identity within the latter group may remain strong. In recent years, some Black homosexuals who have organized to make their voices heard and to fight racial and homosexual bias have become powerful cultural and political forces within the Black community.

According to Dr. Hill, Black gays and lesbians tend to be more communal than their White counterparts. They are more likely than Whites to have children and be involved in extended family systems. Venus Medina, project officer at the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta and a 30-year-old mother of two, says that most Black lesbians identify as "Black women first and lesbians second." Some observers report that such Blacks are more likely to live in Black neighborhoods than in gay and lesbian ghettos.

Still, the Black community does not acknowledge the contributions that lesbians and gays have made to Black culture and the struggle for freedom dating to the times of slavery. Leaders like Alvin Ailey, Bayard Rustin and James Baldwin are cited by Black gay groups for their contributions to the Black struggle. However, some sources hold that many Black homosexuals in leadership positions do not admit their same-sex orientation.

Harold Robinson, co-chair of the board of Gay Men of African Descent, says that the contributions of Black gays and lesbians to the arts, education and politics is so great that it is unconscionable that their accomplishments and sexual preference are not publicly acknowledged. Jerome Boyce, assistant director of Project Survival in Detroit, says few people are aware that Black gays and lesbians have been leaders in the fight against AIDS. When they have shown such a high level of social commitment, it is even more distressing to Black homosexuals that civil rights organizations do not address the issue of gay rights.

Many Blacks, both heterosexual and homosexual, believe that the Black community, with its ongoing crisis, short-changes itself by resisting the input of lesbian and gay "soldiers." As Hill notes, "Bickering only adds to our oppression and retards our development."

Clearly, human rights for gays and lesbians will more firmly establish freedoms for all people in America.

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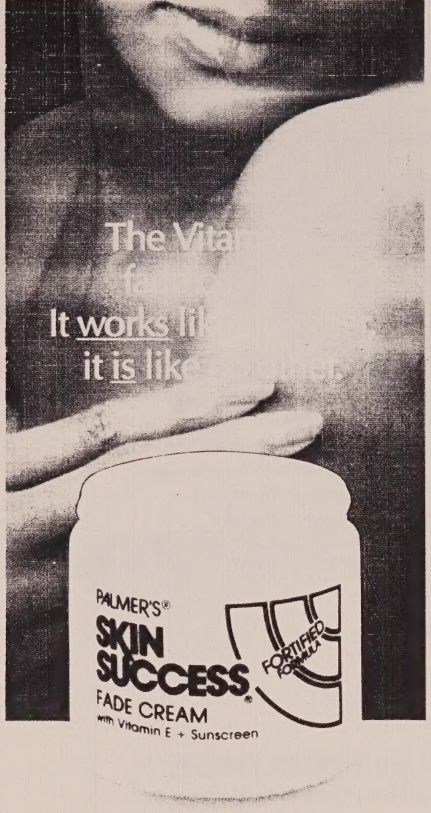

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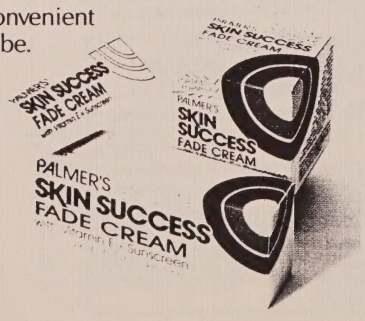

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Jerome Boyce, assistant director of Project Survival in Detroit, regrets that civil rights organizations do not address the issues of gay rights in spite of what he calls gays' high level of social commitment.

AN HONEST LOOK *Continued*

the potential for homosexual behavior exists in most human beings; bisexuality is common.

Accordingly, there is no single gay lifestyle. Many people think most homosexuals are promiscuous, engage in heavy smoking and drinking, and use illegal drugs. Some gay people have even imitated these destructive stereotypes. Yet the horrors of AIDS, alcoholism and lung disease come to all those who abuse their bodies, with no regard for sexual orientation.

It is perhaps inevitable that we are uncomfortable with those who are different from us. Phil Wilson, co-chair of the Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Forum in Los Angeles, reflects on the Black attitude toward gays: "The Black community will not outrightly reject you, but they may make their love for you contingent on your being quiet about your gay orientation. So there is always a threat of rejection." Open demonstrations of gay pride often provoke a strong negative reaction. Harris says that the Black community frequently perceives gays as part of its "problems," alongside such social ills as crime and poverty.

Although some African-Americans can tolerate low-key gay and lesbian behavior, many homosexuals complain that this attitude results in their being treated as *invisible*, thereby suffering the psychologically damaging effects of adapting to that situation. Many gays experience feelings of rejection and low self-esteem. Others become overachievers to mask their homosexuality, according to Bert Hunter, a writer and former IBM marketing representative. The gay predicament is similar to that of Black Americans who historically were rendered invisible by racism.

Many Americans, both Black and White, are homophobic—irrationally fearful of gays and lesbians. Dr. Marjorie J. Hill, a Black clinical psychologist and director of the New York City Mayor's Office for the Lesbian and Gay Community, feels that the Black community, already confused and apprehensive about gays, has had its fear of them reinforced by its anxiety about the AIDS epidemic. Indeed, its head-in-the-sand homophobia has made it difficult to establish AIDS prevention and education programs in African-American neighborhoods. Such fear also precludes an empathic response to the tragedy of AIDS and the grief of those who lose loved ones to the dreaded disease.

The AIDS crisis notwithstanding, homosexuals have a unique mission in convincing their oppressors of their human rights and humanity. Physical assaults and other forms of gay-bashing are a constant bane to the homosexual community. Because they face such overwhelming discrimination and abuse, we can understand why so many elect to stay in the closet.

Black homosexuals report that, in addition to the discrimination they suffer because they are gay, they are subject to racial discrimination by White gays and lesbians. Black gays are not welcome at certain gay bars and bath houses. They are often excluded when White gays advertise for partners or share phone number networks. Sandy Lowe, a staff attorney for the Legal Defense and Education Fund at Lambda who handles sexual orientation discrimination suits, feels that White homosexuals, who are themselves victims of discrimination, still cannot be counted on to be less racist than other Whites.

Being gay and Black, therefore, frequently complicates African-American

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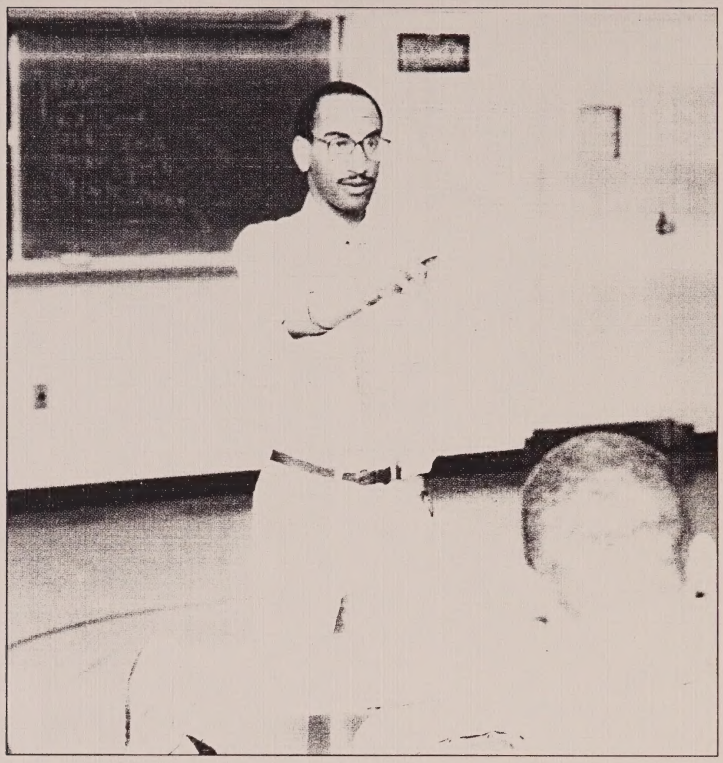

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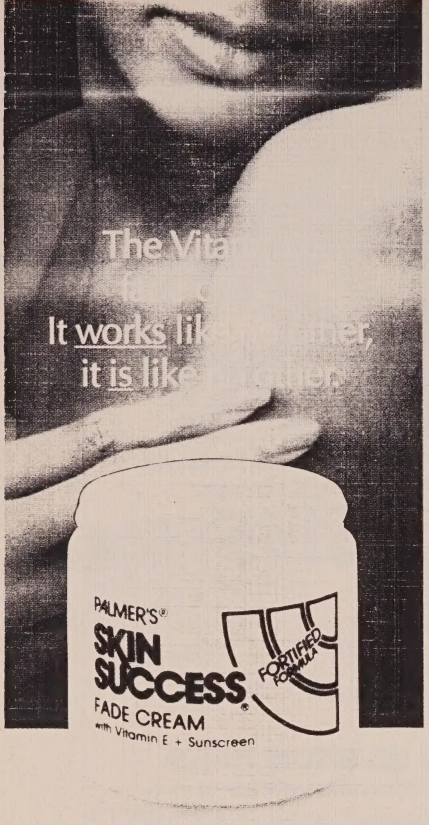

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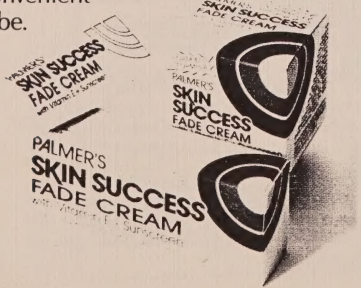

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Jerome Boyce, assistant director of Project Survival in Detroit, regrets that civil rights organizations do not address the issues of gay rights in spite of what he calls gays' high level of social commitment.

AN HONEST LOOK *Continued*

the potential for homosexual behavior exists in most human beings; bisexuality is common.

Accordingly, there is no single gay lifestyle. Many people think most homosexuals are promiscuous, engage in heavy smoking and drinking, and use illegal drugs. Some gay people have even imitated these destructive stereotypes. Yet the horrors of AIDS, alcoholism and lung disease come to all those who abuse their bodies, with no regard for sexual orientation.

It is perhaps inevitable that we are uncomfortable with those who are different from us. Phil Wilson, co-chair of the Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Forum in Los Angeles, reflects on the Black attitude toward gays: "The Black community will not outrightly reject you, but they may make their love for you contingent on your being quiet about your gay orientation. So there is always a threat of rejection." Open demonstrations of gay pride often provoke a strong negative reaction. Harris says that the Black community frequently perceives gays as part of its "problems," alongside such social ills as crime and poverty.

Although some African-Americans can tolerate low-key gay and lesbian behavior, many homosexuals complain that this attitude results in their being treated as *invisible*, thereby suffering the psychologically damaging effects of adapting to that situation. Many gays experience feelings of rejection and low self-esteem. Others become overachievers to mask their homosexuality, according to Bert Hunter, a writer and former IBM marketing representative. The gay predicament is similar to that of Black Americans who historically were rendered invisible by racism.

Many Americans, both Black and White, are homophobic—irrationally fearful of gays and lesbians. Dr. Marjorie J. Hill, a Black clinical psychologist and director of the New York City Mayor's Office for the Lesbian and Gay Community, feels that the Black community, already confused and apprehensive about gays, has had its fear of them reinforced by its anxiety about the AIDS epidemic. Indeed, its head-in-the-sand homophobia has made it difficult to establish AIDS prevention and education programs in African-American neighborhoods. Such fear also precludes an empathic response to the tragedy of AIDS and the grief of those who lose loved ones to the dreaded disease.

The AIDS crisis notwithstanding, homosexuals have a unique mission in convincing their oppressors of their human rights and humanity. Physical assaults and other forms of gay-bashing are a constant bane to the homosexual community. Because they face such overwhelming discrimination and abuse, we can understand why so many elect to stay in the closet.

Black homosexuals report that, in addition to the discrimination they suffer because they are gay, they are subject to racial discrimination by White gays and lesbians. Black gays are not welcome at certain gay bars and bath houses. They are often excluded when White gays advertise for partners or share phone number networks. Sandy Lowe, a staff attorney for the Legal Defense and Education Fund at Lambda who handles sexual orientation discrimination suits, feels that White homosexuals, who are themselves victims of discrimination, still cannot be counted on to be less racist than other Whites.

Being gay and Black, therefore, frequently complicates African-American

BLACK THEOLOGY IN AMERICAN RELIGION

By James H. Cone

"It was the 'African' side of black religion that helped African-Americans to see beyond the white distortions of the Gospel and to discover its true meaning as God's liberation of the oppressed from bondage. It was the 'Christian' element in black religion that helped African-Americans to re-orient their African past so that it would become useful in the struggle to survive with dignity in a society that they did not make."

MORE than eighty years ago, W.E.B. DuBois wrote the following in *The Souls of Black Folk,* his classic statement of the paradox of black life in America:

> It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness,—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.[1]

The "two warring ideals" that DuBois described in 1903 have been at the center of black religious thought from its origin to the present day. They are found in the heated debates about "integration" and "nationalism" and in the attempt to name the community—beginning with the word "African" and using at different times such terms as "Colored," "Negro," "Afro-American," and "Black."

In considering black religious thought, let us give clearer names to the "two warring ideals"—clearer, that is, from the point of view of religion. I will call them "African" and "Christian." Black religious thought is not identical with the Christian theology of white Americans. Nor is it identical with traditional African beliefs, past or present. It is both—but reinterpreted for and adapted to the life-situation of black people's

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[1]W.E.B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett Premier Book, 1968), pp. 16–17. Originally published in 1903.

struggle for justice in a nation whose social, political, and economic structures are dominated by a white racist ideology. It was the "African" side of black religion that helped African-Americans to see beyond the white distortions of the Gospel and to discover its true meaning as God's liberation of the oppressed from bondage. It was the "Christian" element in black religion that helped African-Americans to reorient their African past so that it would become useful in the struggle to survive with dignity in a society that they did not make.

Although the African and Christian elements are found throughout the history of black religious thought, the Christian part gradually became dominant. Though less visible, the African element continued to play an important role in defining the core of black religion, thus preventing it from becoming merely an imitation of Protestant or Catholic theologies in the West.

Of course, there are many similarities between black religious thought and white Protestant and Catholic reflections on the Christian tradition. But the *dissimilarities* between them are perhaps more important than the similarities. The similarities are found at the point of a common Christian identity, and the dissimilarities can best be understood in light of the differences between African and European cultures in the New World. While whites used their cultural perspective to dominate others, blacks used theirs to affirm their dignity and to empower themselves to struggle for justice. The major reason for the differences between black and white reflections on God is found at the point of the great differences in life. As white theology is largely defined by its response to modern and post-modern societies of Europe and America, usually ignoring the contradictions of slavery and oppression in black life; black religious thought is the thinking of slaves and of marginalized blacks whose understanding of God was shaped by the contradictions that white theologians ignored and regarded as unworthy of serious theological reflection.

I

The tension between the "African" and "Christian" elements acted to reorder traditional theological themes in black religion and to give them different substance when compared to other theologies in Europe and America. Five themes in particular defined the character of black religous thought during slavery and its subsequent development: justice, liberation, hope, love, and suffering.

No theme has been more prominent throughout the history of black religious thought than the justice of God. African-Americans have always believed in the living presence of the God who establishes the right by punishing the wicked and liberating their victims from oppression. Everyone will be rewarded and punished according to their deeds, and no one—absolutely no one—can escape the judgment of God, who alone is the sovereign of the universe. Evil-doers may get by for a time,

and good people may suffer unjustly under oppression, but "sooner or later, . . . we reap as we sow."[2]

The "sooner" referred to contemporary historically observable events: punishment of the oppressors and liberation of the oppressed. The "later" referred to the divine establishment of justice in the "next world" where God "gwineter rain down fire" on the wicked and where the liberated righteous will "walk in Jerusalem just like John." In the religion of African slaves, God's justice was identical with the punishment of the oppressors, and divine liberation was synonymous with the deliverance of the oppressed from the bondage of slavery—if not "now" then in the "not yet." Because whites continued to prosper materially as they increased their victimization of African-Americans, black religious thought spoke more often of the "later" than the "sooner."[3]

The themes of justice and liberation are closely related to the idea of hope. The God who establishes the right and puts down the wrong is the sole basis of the hope that the suffering of the victims will be eliminated. Although African slaves used the term heaven to describe their experience of hope, its primary meaning for them must not be reduced to the "pie-in-the-sky," otherworldly affirmation that often characterized white evangelical Protestantism. The idea of heaven was the means by which slaves affirmed their humanity in a world that did not recognize them as human beings.[4] It was their way of saying that they were made for freedom and not slavery.

> Oh Freedom! Oh Freedom!
> Oh Freedom, I love thee!
> And before I'll be a slave,
> I'll be buried in my grave,
> And go home to my Lord and be free.

Black slaves' hope was based on their faith in God's promise to "protect the needy" and to "defend the poor." Just as God delivered the Hebrew children from Egyptian bondage and raised Jesus from the dead, so God will also deliver African slaves from American slavery and "in due time" will bestow upon them the gift of eternal life. That was why they sang:

> Soon-a-will be done with the trouble of the world;
> Soon-a-will be done with the trouble of the world;
> Going home to live with God.

Black slaves' faith in the coming justice of God was the chief reason why they could hold themselves together in servitude and sometimes fight back, even though the odds were against them.

The ideas of justice, liberation, and hope should be seen in relation to the important theme of love. Theologically, God's love is prior to the other themes. But in order to separate black reflections on love from a similar theme in white theology, it is important to emphasize that love in black religious thought is usually linked with God's justice, liberation, and hope. God's love is made known through divine righteousness, liberating the poor for a new future.

God's creation of all persons in the divine image bestows sacredness upon human beings and thus makes them the children of God. To violate any person's dignity is to transgress "God's great law of love."[5] We must love the neighbor because God has first loved us. And because slavery and racism are blatant denials of the dignity of the human person, God's justice means that "He will call the oppressors to account."[6]

Despite the strength of black faith, belief in God's coming justice and liberation was not easy for African slaves and their descendants. Their suffering created the most serious challenge to their faith. If God is good, why did God permit millions of blacks to be stolen from Africa and enslaved in a strange land? No black person has been able to escape the existential agony of that question.

In their attempt to resolve the theological dilemma that slavery and racism created, African-Americans turned to two texts—the Exodus and Psalm 68:31.[7] They derived from the Exodus text the belief that God is the liberator of the oppressed. They interpreted Psalm 68:31 as an obscure reference to God's promise to redeem Africa: "Princes shall come out of Egypt, and Ethiopia shall soon stretch forth her hands unto God." Despite African-Americans' reflections on these texts, the contradictions remained between oppression and their faith.

II

The withdrawal of the black church from politics and its alliance with the accommodation philosophy of Booker T. Washington created the conditions that gave rise to the civil rights movement: the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909,

[2]A concise statement of the major themes in black religious thought, during and following slavery, is found in a 1902 sermon of an ex-slave and Princeton Theological Seminary graduate, Francis J. Grimke: "God is not dead,—nor is he an indifferent onlooker at what is going on in this world. One day He will make restitution for blood; He will call the oppressors to account. Justice may sleep, but it never dies. The individual, race, or nation which does wrong, which sets at defiance God's great law, especially God's great law of love, of brotherhood, will be sure, sooner or later, to pay the penalty. We reap as we sow. With that measure we mete, it shall be measured to us again." (See C. G. Woodson, ed., *The Works of Francis J. Grimke, I*, 1942, p. 354.) Grimke's statement was undoubtedly influenced by the slave song, "You shall reap jes what you sow."

[3]For an interpretation of the slaves' idea of justice and liberation, see my *The Spirituals and the Blues* (New York: Seabury, 1972), especially chap. 3. See also Albert J. Raboteau, *Slave Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978); Vincent Harding, *There Is A River* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981); and Gayraud S. Wilmore, *Black Religion and Black Radicalism* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, rev. ed., 1983).

[4]For a fuller discussion of the idea of heaven in slave religion, see my *The Spirituals and the Blues*, chap. 5. See also John Lovell, Jr., *Black Song* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), especially pp. 310–312, 315–374.

[5]*Works of Grimke*, p. 354.

[6]*Ibid.*

[7]For an interpretation of these texts, see Albert J. Raboteau, " 'Ethiopia Shall Soon Stretch Forth Her Hands': Black Destiny in Nineteenth-Century America," *The University Lecture in Religion at Arizona State University* (Jan. 27, 1983).

the National Urban League (NUL) in 1911, and the Congress for Racial Equality (CORE) in 1942. These national organizations, and similar local and regional groups in many parts of the country, took up the cause of justice and equality of blacks in the society. They were strongly influenced by ideas and persons in the churches. Civil rights organizations not only internalized ideas about justice, liberation, hope, love, and suffering that had been preached in the churches; they also used church property to convene their own meetings and usually made appeals for support at church conferences. The close relations between the NAACP and the black churches has led some to say that "the black church is the NAACP on its knees."

Due to the de-radicalization of the black church, progressive black ministers found it difficult to remain involved in the internal affairs of their denominations. Baptist ministers, because of the automony of their local congregations, found it easier than Methodists to remain pastors while also being deeply involved in struggle for black equality in the society. Prominent examples included Adam Clayton Powell, Sr. and Jr., father and son pastors of Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York. Adam, Jr., made his entree on the public stage by leading a four-year non-violent direct-action campaign, securing some ten thousand jobs for Harlem blacks. In 1944, he was elected to Congress.

Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., embraced that part of the black religious tradition that refused to separate the Christian Gospel from the struggle for justice in society. In his influential *Marching Blacks,* he accused white churches of turning Christianity into "churchianity," thereby distorting the essential message of the Gospel which is "equality" and "brotherhood."

> The great loving heart of God has been embalmed and laid coolly away in the tombs we call churches. Christ of the Manger, the carpenter's bench, and the borrowed tomb has once again been crucified in stained-glass windows.[8]

Other influential thinkers of this period included Howard Thurman and Benjamin E. Mays. Thurman wrote twenty-two books and lectured at more than five hundred institutions. He also served as dean of Rankin Chapel and professor of theology at Howard University; the dean of Marsh Chapel and minister-at-large of Boston University; and as minister and co-founder of the interdenominational Fellowship Church of San Francisco. His writings and preaching influenced many, and *Life* magazine cited him as one of the twelve "Great Preachers" of this century. Unlike most black ministers concerned about racial justice, liberation, love, suffering, and hope, Thurman did not become a political activist; he took the "inward journey" (the title of one of his books), focussing on a "spiritual quest" for liberation beyond race and ethnic

[8]Adam C. Powell, Jr., *Marching Blacks* (New York: Dial Press, 1945; rev. ed. 1973), p. 194.

origin. He was able to develop this universalist perspective without ignoring the urgency of the political issues involved in the black struggle for justice.[9]

Benjamin E. Mays, ecumenist and long-time president of Morehouse College, also made an important contribution to black religious thought through his writings and addresses on the black church and racism in America. He chaired the National Conference on Religion and Race in 1963.[10] Mays was an example of a black religious thinker who found the black church too limiting as a context for confronting the great problems of justice, liberation, love, hope, and suffering. Like Thurman and Powell, Mays regarded racism as anti-Christian, an evil that must be eliminated from the churches and society.

No thinker has made a greater impact upon black religious thought or even upon American society and religion as a whole than Martin Luther King, Jr. The fact that many white theologians can write about American religion and theology with no reference to him reveals both the persistence of racism in the academy and the tendency to limit theology narrowly to the academic discourse of seminary and university professors.

Much has been written about the influence of King's graduate education upon his thinking and practice, especially the writings of George Davis, Henry David Thoreau, Mahatma Gandhi, Edgar S. Brightman, Harold DeWolf, G. W. Hegel, Walter Rauschenbusch, Paul Tillich, and Reinhold Niebuhr.[11] Of course, these religious and philosophical thinkers influenced him greatly, but it is a mistake to use them as the primary basis for an interpretation of his life and thought. King was a product of the black church tradition; its faith determined the essence of his theology.[12] He used the intellectual tools of highly recognized thinkers to explain what he believed to the white public and also to express the universal character of the Gospel. But he did not arrive at his convictions about God by reading white theologians. On the

[9]Some of Howard Thurman's most influential writings include *Deep River* (1945), *The Negro Spiritual Speaks of Life and Death* (1947), *Jesus and the Disinherited* (1949), and *The Search for Common Ground* (1971).

[10]For an account of that conference, see Mathew Ahmann (ed.), *Race: Challenge to Religion* (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1963). Influential works by B. E. Mays include (with Joseph W. Nicholson) *The Negro's Church* (1933), *The Negro's God* (1938), *Seeking To Be Christian in Race Relations* (1957), and *Born To Rebel* (1971).

[11]See especially Kenneth L. Smith and Ira G. Zepp, Jr., *Search For The Beloved Community: The Thinking of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Valley Forge: Judson, 1974); John J. Ansbro, *Martin Luther King, Jr.: The Making of a Mind* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1982).

[12]The importance of the black religious tradition for King's theology has not received the attention by scholars that it deserves. See my "Martin Luther King, Jr., Black Theology—Black Church," THEOLOGY TODAY, Jan. 1984. See also the important essay of Lewis V. Baldwin, "Martin Luther King, Jr., the Black Church, and the Black Messianic Vision," *Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center* (forthcoming). David Garrow's definitive biography on King is soon to be published under the title *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, 1955–1958.* It will show the important role of the black church tradition in his life and thought.

contrary, he derived his religious beliefs from his acceptance of black faith and his application of it to the civil rights struggle.

In moments of crisis, King turned to the God of black faith. From the beginning of his role as the leader of the Montgomery bus boycott to his tragic death in Memphis, he was a public embodiment of the central ideas of black religious thought. The heart of his beliefs revolved around the ideas of love, justice, liberation, hope, and redemptive suffering. The meaning of each is mutually dependent on the others. Though love may be appropriately placed at the center of his thought, he interpreted it in the light of justice for the poor, liberation for all, and the certain hope that God has not left this world in the hands of evil people.

King often used the writings of Tillich, Niebuhr, and other white thinkers to express his own ideas about the interrelations of love and justice. But it was his internalization of their meaning in the black church tradition that helped him to see that "unmerited suffering is redemptive." While the fighters for justice must be prepared to suffer in the struggle for liberation, they must never inflict suffering on others. That was why King described non-violence as "the Christian way in human relations" and "the only road to freedom."[13]

III

To understand King's thinking, it is necessary to understand him in the context of his own religious heritage. His self-description is revealing:

> I am many things to many people; Civil Rights leader, agitator, troublemaker, and orator, but in the quietness of my heart, I am fundamentally a clergyman, a Baptist preacher. This is my being and my heritage for I am also the son of a Baptist preacher, the grandson of a Baptist preacher, and the great-grandson of a Baptist preacher. The church is my life, and I have given my life to the church.[14]

The decisive impact of the black church heritage upon King can be seen in his ideas about justice, liberation, love, hope, and suffering. He took the democratic tradition of freedom and combined it with the biblical tradition of justice and liberation as found in Exodus and the Old Testament prophets. Then he integrated both traditions with the New Testament idea of love and suffering as disclosed in Jesus' cross. And from all three, he developed a theology that was effective in challenging all Americans to create the beloved community in which all persons are equal. While it was the Gandhian method of non-violence that provided the strategy for achieving justice, it was, as King said, "through the influence of the Negro church" that "the way of non-violence became an integral part of our struggle."[15]

[13]See Martin Luther King, Jr., "Non-Violence: The Christian Way in Human Relations," *Presbyterian Life*, Feb. 1958; "Non-Violence: The Only Road to Freedom," *Ebony*, Oct. 1966.

[14]King, "The Un-Christian Christian," *Ebony*, Aug. 1965, p. 77.

[15]See his "Letter From Birmingham Jail," in his *Why We Can't Wait* (New York: Harper, 1963), pp. 90–91.

As a Christian whose faith was derived from the cross of Jesus, King believed that there could be no true liberation without suffering. Through non-violent suffering, he contended, blacks would not only liberate themselves from the necessity of bitterness and the feeling of inferiority toward whites, but would also prick the conscience of whites and liberate them from a feeling of superiority. The mutual liberation of blacks and whites lays the foundation for both to work together toward the creation of an entirely new world.

In accordance with this theological vision, he initially rejected black power because of its connotations of hate, and he believed that no beloved community of blacks and whites could be created out of bitterness. King said that he would continue to preach non-violence even if he became its only advocate. It is significant that he softened his attitude toward black power shortly before his assassination and viewed its positive elements as a much needed philosophy in order to eradicate self-hate in the black community, especially as revealed in the riots in the cities.[16] He began to speak of a need to "teach about black culture" (especially black philosophers, poets, and musicians) and even of "temporary separation,"[17] because he realized that without self-respect and dignity, black people could not participate with others in creating the beloved community.

A similar but even more radical position was taken in regard to the war in Vietnam. Because the Civil Rights Act (1964) and the Voting Rights Bill (1965) did not significantly affect the life-chances of the poor, and because of the failure of President Johnson's "War on Poverty," King became convinced that his dream of 1963 had been turned into a nightmare.[18] Gradually, he began to see the connections

[16]The best sources for King's affirmative emphasis on black power and pride are his unpublished speeches on the "Pre-Washington Campaign," recruiting persons for the Poor People's March to Washington. See especially his addresses at Clarksdale, Miss. (March 19, 1968), p. 7; Eutaw, Ala. (March 20, 1968), p. 3; Albany, Ga. (March 22, 1968), pp. 5f. In Albany, he said: "We are somebody. We're going to teach our young people something about their heritage. We're going to let them know that Plato and Aristotle were not the only philosophers that came through history, but W.E.B. DuBois, a black man was a political philosopher." Most of King's unpublished papers, addresses, and sermons are found at the Martin Luther King, Jr., Center for Nonviolent Social Change, Atlanta, Georgia.

[17]In an interview article, King said: "I must honestly say that . . . there are points at which I see the necessity for temporary segregation in order to get to the integrated society. . . . Often . . . the Negro is integrated without power. . . . We want to be integrated with power. . . . And this is why I think it is absolutely necessary to see integration in political terms, to see that there are some situations where separation may serve as a temporary way-station to the ultimate goal which we seek." "Conversation with Martin Luther King," *Conservative Judaism*, Vol. XXII, no. 3, Spring 1968, pp. 8, 9.

[18]On many occasions, King talked about his dream of 1963 being turned into a nightmare. The most informative reference in this regard is his "Christmas Sermon on Peace," delivered in Ebenezer Baptist Church, Atlanta, Dec. 24, 1967. In that sermon, he said: "In 1963 . . . in Washington, D.C., . . . I tried to talk to the nation about a dream that I had had, and I must confess . . . that not long after talking about that dream I started seeing it turn into a nightmare. I remember the first time I saw that dream turn into a nightmare, just a few weeks after I had talked about it. It was when four beautiful . . . Negro girls were murdered in a church in Birmingham, Alabama. I watched that dream

between the failure of the war on poverty and the expenditures for the war in Vietnam. In the tradition of the Old Testament prophets and against the advice of many of his closest associates in black and white communities, King stood before a capacity crowd at Riverside Church in New York and condemned America as "the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today."[19]

He proclaimed God's judgment against America and insisted that God would break the backbone of American power if this nation did not bring justice to the poor and peace to the world. Vicious criticisms came from blacks and whites in government, civil rights groups, media, and the nation generally as he proclaimed God's righteous indignation against the three great evils of our time—war, racism, and poverty.

During the severe crises of 1966–68, King turned, not to the theologians and philosophers of his graduate education, but to his own religious heritage. It was the eschatological hope, derived from his slave grandparents and mediated through the black church, that sustained him in the midst of grief and disappointment. This hope also empowered him to "master [his] fears" of death and to "stand by the best in a evil time."[20] In an unpublished sermon, preached at Ebenezer Baptist Church, Atlanta, he said:

> I've decided what I'm going to do; I ain't going to kill nobody . . . in Mississippi . . . and . . . in Vietnam, and I ain't going to study war no more. And you know what? I don't care who doesn't like what I say about it. I don't care who criticizes me in an editorial; I don't care what white person or Negro criticizes me. I'm going to stick with the best. . . . Every now and then we sing about it: "If you are right, God will fight your battle." I'm going to stick by the best during these evil times.[21]

It was not easy for King to "stand by the best," because he often stood alone. But he firmly believed that the God of black faith had said to him:

turn into a nightmare as I moved through the ghettos of the nation and saw my black brothers and sisters perishing on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity, and saw the nation doing nothing to grapple with the Negroes' problem of poverty. I saw that dream turn into a nightmare as I watched my black brothers and sisters in the midst of anger and understandable outrage . . . turn to misguided riots to try to solve that problem. I saw that dream turn into a nightmare as I watched the war in Vietnam escalating, and as I saw so-called military advisers, 16,000 strong, turn into fighting soldiers until today over 500,000 Americans boys are fighting on Asian soil. Yes, I am personally the victim of deferred dreams, of blasted hopes." (See King, *The Trumpet of Conscience* [New York: Harper, 1967], pp. 75–76.) See also similar comments at an Operation Breadbasket Meeting, Chicago Theological Seminary (March 25, 1967), and also during his appearance on Arlene Francis Show (June 19, 1967). (King Center Archives.)

[19]See Martin Luther King, Jr., "Beyond Vietnam," a pamphlet published by Clergy and Laity Concerned, 1982 reprint of his April 4, 1967, speech at Riverside Church in New York, p. 2.

[20]The most reliable sources for King's theology are the unpublished sermons at the King Center Archives. They include: "A Knock at Midnight," All Saints Community Church, Los Angeles (June 25, 1967); "Standing By The Best In An Evil Time," Ebenezer Baptist Church, Atlanta (Aug. 6, 1967); "Thou Fool," Mount Pisgah Baptist Church, Chicago (Aug. 27, 1967); "Mastering Our Fears," Ebenezer (Sept. 10, 1967).

[21]"Standing By The Best In An Evil Time," p. 7.

> "Martin Luther, stand up for righteousness. Stand up for justice. Stand up for truth. And lo, I will be with you, even until the end of the world."[22]

King combined the exodus-liberation and cross-love themes with the message of hope found in the resurrection of Jesus. Hope for him was not derived from the optimism of liberal Protestant theology, but rather was based on his belief in the righteousness of God as defined by his reading of the Bible through the eyes of his slave foreparents. The result was the most powerful expression in black history of the essential themes of black religious thought from the integrationist viewpoint.

> Centuries ago Jeremiah raised a question, "Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician?" He raised it because he saw the good people suffering so often and the evil people prospering. Centuries later our slave foreparents came along and they too saw the injustices of life and had nothing to look forward to, morning after morning, but the rawhide whip of the overseer, long rows of cotton and the sizzling heat; but they did an amazing thing. They looked back across the centuries, and they took Jeremiah's question mark and straightened it into an exclamation point. And they could sing, "There is a balm in Gilead to make the wounded whole. There is a balm in Gilead to heal the sinsick soul."[23]

IV

From the time of its origin in slavery to the present, black religious thought has been faced with the question of whether to advocate integration into American society or separation from it. The majority of participants in black churches and the civil rights movement have promoted integration, and they have interpreted justice, liberation, love, suffering, and hope in light of the goal of creating a society in which blacks and whites can live together in a "beloved community."

While integrationists have emphasized the American side of the double consciousness of African-Americans, there have also been nationalists who rejected any association with America and instead have turned toward Africa. Nationalists contend that blacks will never be accepted as equals in a white racist church and society. Black freedom

[22]"Thou Fool," p. 14. This quotation is taken from King's account of his "conversion experience," that is, his existential appropriation of the faith he was taught during his childhood. There is no doubt that the "kitchen experience," as it might be called, was the turning point in King's theological development. During the early stages of the Montgomery bus boycott, the constant threats of death to him and his family (about 40 telephone calls per day) eventually caused him to admit that he was "weak, . . . faltering, [and] . . . losing [his] courage." In that crisis moment when the fear of death engulfed him, he said: "I pulled back on the theology and philosophy that I had just studied in the universities, trying to give philosophical and theological reasons for the existence and reality of sin and evil, but the answer didn't quite come there" (p. 13). The answer came in his dependence on the God of black faith. "Don't be a fool," he said in his climactic conclusion to this sermon. "Recognize your dependence on God. As the days become dark, and the nights become dreary, realize that there is a God, who rules above. And so I'm not worried about tomorrow. I get weary every now and then, the future looks difficult and dim, but I'm not worried ultimately because I have faith in God" (p. 14).

[23]This is an often-used conclusion of many of King's sermons. This quotation is taken from "Thou Fool."

can be achieved only by black people separating themselves from whites—either by returning to Africa or by forcing the government to set aside a separate state in the United States so blacks can build their own society.[24]

The nationalist perspective on the black struggle for freedom is deeply embedded in the history of black religious thought. Some of its prominent advocates include: Bishop Henry McNeal Turner of the A.M.E. Church; Marcus Garvey, the founder of the Universal Negro Improvement Association; and Malcolm X of the religion of Islam. Black nationalism is centered on blackness, a repudiation of any value in white culture and religion. Nationalists reversed the values of the dominant society by attributing to black history and culture what whites had said about theirs. For example, Bishop Turner claimed that "we have as much right biblically and otherwise to believe that God is a Negro, . . . as you . . . , white people have to believe that God is a fine looking, symmetrical and ornamented white man."[25] Marcus Garvey held a similar view:

> If the white man has the idea of a white God, let him worship his God as he desires. . . . We Negroes believe in the God of Ethiopia, the everlasting God—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, the One God of all ages.[26]

The most persuasive interpreter of black nationalism during the 1960s was Malcolm X, who proclaimed a challenging critique of King's philosophy of integration, non-violence, and love. Malcolm X advocated black unity instead of the "beloved community," self-defense in lieu of non-violence, and self-love in place of turning the other cheek to whites.[27]

Like Turner and Garvey, Malcolm X asserted that God is black; but unlike them he rejected Christianity as the white man's religion. He became a convert initially to Elijah Muhammad's Nation of Islam and later to the world-wide Islamic community. His critique of Christianity and of American society as white was so persuasive that many blacks followed him into the religion of Islam, and others accepted his criticisms even though they did not become Muslims. Malcolm pushed civil rights activists to the left and caused many black Christians to re-evaluate their interpretation of Christianity.

[24]For an excellent introduction to black nationalism, see Alphonso Pinkney, *Red, Black, and Green: Black Nationalism in the United States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976). See also John H. Bracey, Jr., August Meier, and Elliott Rudwick (eds.), *Black Nationalism in America* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1970).

[25]Edwin S. Redkey (ed.), *Respect Black: The Writings and Speeches of Henry McNeal Turner* (New York: Arno Press, 1971), p. 176.

[26]Amy Jacques-Garvey (ed.), *Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey*, (New York: Arno Press, 1968), p. 44.

[27]The best introduction to Malcolm X's philosophy is still *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, with the assistance of Alex Haley (New York: Grove Press, 1965).

> Brothers and sisters, the white man has brainwashed us black people to fasten our gaze upon a blond-haired, blue-eyed Jesus! We're worshiping a Jesus that doesn't even *look* like us! Now, just think of this. The blond-haired, blue-eyed white man has taught you and me to worship a *white* Jesus, and to shout and sing and pray to this God that's *his* God, the white man's God. The white man has taught us to shout and sing and pray until we *die*, to wait until *death*, for some dreamy heaven-in-the-hereafter, when we're *dead*, while this white man has his milk and honey in the streets paved with golden dollars right here on *this* earth![28]

During the first-half of the 1960s, King's interpretation of justice as equality with whites, liberation as integration, and love as non-violence dominated the thinking of the black religious community. But after the riot in Watts (Los Angeles), August 1965, some black clergy began to take another look at Malcolm's philosophy, especially in regard to his criticisms of Christianity and American society. Malcolm X's contention that America was a nightmare and not a dream began to ring true to many black clergy as they watched their communities go up in flames as young blacks shouted in jubilation, "burn, baby, burn."

It was during the James Meredith "march against fear" in Mississippi (June 1966, after Malcolm's assassination in February 1965) that some black clergy began openly to question King's philosophy of love, integration, and non-violence. When Stokely Carmichael proclaimed "black power," it sounded like the voice of Malcolm X. Though committed to the Christian gospel, black clergy found themselves moving slowly from integration to separation, from Martin King to Malcolm X.

The rise of black power created a decisive turning point in black religious thought. Black power forced black clergy to raise the theological question about the relation between black faith and white religion. Although blacks have always recognized the ethical heresy of white Christians, they have not always extended it to Euro-American theology. With its accent on the cultural heritage of Africa and political liberation "by any means necessary," black power shook black clergy out of their theological complacency.

V

Separating themselves from King's absolute commitment to non-violence, a small group of black clergy, mostly from the North, addressed the black power movement positively and critically. Like King and unlike black power advocates, black clergy were determined to remain within the Christian community. This was their dilemma: How could they reconcile Christianity and black power, Martin King and Malcolm X?

Under the influence of Malcolm X and the political philosophy of black power, many black theologians began to advocate the necessity for

[28]*Ibid.*, p. 222.

the development of a black theology, and they rejected the dominant theologies of Europe and North America as heretical. For the first time in the history of black religious thought, black clergy and theologians began to recognize the need for a completely new starting point in theology, and they insisted that it must be defined by people at the bottom and not the top of the socio-economic ladder. To accomplish this task, black theologians focused on God's liberation of the poor as the central message of the gospel.[29]

To explicate the theological significance of the liberation motif, black theologians began to re-read the Bible through the eyes of their slave grandparents and started to speak of God's solidarity with the wretched of the earth. As the political liberation of the poor emerged as the dominant motif, justice, suffering, love, and hope were re-interpreted in its light. For the biblical meaning of liberation, black theologians turned to the Exodus, while the message of the prophets provided the theological content for the theme of justice. The Gospel story of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus served as the biblical foundation for a re-interpretation of love, suffering, and hope in the context of the black struggle for liberation and justice.

As black theologians have re-read the Bible in the light of the struggles of the oppressed, the idea of the "suffering God" has become important in our theological perspective. Our theological imagination has been stirred by Jürgen Moltmann's writing about the "Crucified God" as well as Luther's distinction between the "theology of glory" and the "theology of the cross." But it has been the actual suffering of the oppressed in black and other Third World communities that has been decisive in our reflections on the cross of Jesus Christ.

As Gustavo Gutierrez has said: "We cannot speak of the death of Jesus until we speak of the real death of people." For in the deaths of the poor of the world is found the suffering and even the death of God. The political implications of Luther's insight on this point seemed to have been greatly distorted with his unfortunate emphasis on the two kingdoms. Many modern day Lutheran scholars are even worse, because they turn the cross of Jesus into a theological idea completely unrelated to the concrete historical struggles of the oppressed for freedom. For most Lutheran scholars, the theology of the cross is a theological concept to be contrasted with philosophical and metaphysical speculations. It is a

[29]For an account of the origin of black theology, see my *For My People: Black Theology and the Black Church* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1984). See also Gayraud S. Wilmore and James H. Cone (eds.), *Black Theology: A Documentary History, 1966–1979* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1979). The best narrative history of black theology by one of its creators is Gayraud S. Wilmore, *Black Religion and Black Radicalism* (Maryknoll: Orbis, rev. ed., 1983). My *Black Theology and Black Power* (New York: Seabury, 1969) and *A Black Theology of Liberation* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1970) were the earliest published books on black theology. They were followed by J. Deotis Roberts, *Liberation and Reconciliation: A Black Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971) and Major Jones, *Black Awareness: A Theology of Hope* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1971).

way of making a distinction between faith and reason, justification by faith through grace and justification by the works of reason.

But when the poor of North America and the Third World read the passion story of the cross, they do not view it as a theological idea but as God's suffering solidarity with the victims of the world. Jesus' cross is God's election of the poor by taking their pain and suffering upon the divine person. Black slaves expressed this theological point in such songs as "he never said a mumblin' word" and "were you there when they crucified my Lord."

> They nail my Jesus down,
> They put him on the crown of thorns,
> O see my Jesus hangin' high!
> He look so pale an' bleed so free:
> O don't you think it was a shame,
> He hung three hours in dreadful pain?

Modern-day black theologians make a similar point when they say that "God is black" and that "Jesus is the Oppressed One." Our rejection of European metaphysical speculations and our acceptance of an apparently crude anthropomorphic way of speaking of God are black theologians' way of concretizing Paul's saying that "God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong, God chose what is low and despised in the world, even the things that are not, to bring to nothing the things that are" (I Cor. 1:27–28).

Another characteristic of black theology is its de-emphasis, though not complete rejection, of the Western theological tradition and its affirmation of black history and culture. If the suffering of God is revealed in the suffering of the oppressed, then it follows that theology cannot achieve its Christian identity apart from a systematic and critical reflection upon the history and culture of the victims of oppression. When this theological insight impressed itself upon our consciousness, we black theologians began to realize that we have been miseducated.

European and North American theologians have stifled the indigenous development of the theological perspectives of blacks by teaching us that our own cultural traditions are not appropriate sources for an interpretation of the Christian Gospel. Europeans and white North Americans taught us that the Western theological tradition as defined by Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, and Schleiermacher is the essential source for a knowledge of the Christian past. But when black theologians began to concentrate on black culture and history, we realized that our own historical and cultural traditions are far more important for an analysis of the Gospel in the struggle of freedom than are the Western traditions which participated in our enslavement. We now know that the people responsible for or indifferent to the oppression of blacks are not likely to provide the theological resources for our

liberation. If oppressed peoples are to be liberated, they must themselves create the means for it to happen.

VI

The focus on black culture in the light of the black liberation struggle has led to an emphasis upon praxis as the context out of which Christian theology develops. To know the truth is to do the truth, that is, to make happen in history what is confessed in church. People are not poor by divine decree or by historical accident. They are *made* poor by the rich and powerful few. This means that to do black liberation theology, one must make a commitment, an option *for* the poor and *against* those who are responsible for their poverty.

Because black theology is to be created only in the struggles of the poor, we have adopted social analysis, especially of racism, and more recently of classism and sexism, as a critical component of its methodology. How can we participate in the liberation of the poor from poverty if we do not know *who* the poor are and *why* they live in poverty? Social analysis is a tool that helps us to know why the social, economic, and political orders are arranged as they are. It enables us to know not only who benefits from the present status quo, but what must be done to change it.

In our struggle to make a new start in theology, we discovered, to our surprise and satisfaction, that theologians in Asia, Africa, and Latin America were making similar efforts in their contexts.[30] The same was true among other ethnic minorities in the First World and among women in all groups.[31] Black theology has been challenged to address the issues of sexism[32] and classism in a global context, and we have challenged them, especially Latin Americans and feminist theologians

[30]For an account of black theologians' dialogue with theologians in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, see *Black Theology: A Documentary History*, pp. 445–608; and *For My People*, pp. 140–156. See also my essays in the volumes that have been published from the conferences of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians: "A Black American Perspective on the Future of African Theology," in Sergio Torres and Kofi Appiah-Kubi (eds.), *African Theology en Route* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1979); "A Black American Perspective on the Search for Full Humanity," in Virginia Fabella (ed.), *Asia's Struggle for Full Humanity* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1980); "From Geneva to Sao Paulo: A Dialogue Between Black Theology and Latin American Liberation Theology," in Sergio Torres and John Eagleson (eds.), *The Challenge of Basic Christian Communities* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1981); "Reflections from the Perspective of U.S. Blacks," in Virginia Fabella and Sergio Torres (eds.), *Irruption of the Third World: Challenge to Theology* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1983); "Black Theology: Its Origin, Method, and Relation to Third World Theologies," in Sergio Torres and Virginia Fabella (eds.), *Doing Theology in a Divided World* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1985).

[31]The dialogue between black theology and other ethnic theologies in the U.S. has taken place in the context of the Theology in the Americas dialogue. For an interpretation of this dialogue, see *For My People*, chap. vii; see also Sergio Torres and John Eagleson (eds.), *Theology in the Americas* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1976), and Cornel West, Caridad Guidote, and Margaret Coakley (eds.), *Theology in the Americas: Detroit II Conference Papers* (Maryknoll: Orbis-Probe, 1982).

[32]See especially *Black Theology: A Documentary History*, pp. 363–442; Cone, *My Soul Looks Back* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1982); and *For My People*, chap. vi.

of the dominant culture, to address racism. The focus on liberation has been reinforced and deepened. What many of us now know is that a turning point has been made in the theologies of black and Third World communities as radical as were Luther, Schleiermacher, and Barth in the sixteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries in Europe.

Let us hope that the revolution in liberation theology will change not only how we think about God, but more importantly what we do in this world so that the victims might make a future that is defined by freedom and justice and not slavery and oppression.

RE-CONTEXTUALIZING THEOLOGY

By Rosemary Radford Ruether

"In his essay on 'Black Theology in American Religion,' James Cone speaks of the 'warring ideals' that have divided African identity. . . . The re-contextualization of theology arises in a somewhat different way for women."

In his essay on "Black Theology in American Religion," James Cone speaks of the "warring ideals" that have divided African identity and American identity. These same warring ideals continue today for black theologians in the debate between African and Christian identities. For Cone, black theology is distinctly Christian, but contextualized in black American experience with its roots in African culture.

This same kind of dilemma could be posed in the context of any number of alternative theological perspectives arising today among Hispanics, Native Americans, and Asians. And this also applies for indigenous and liberation theologies being developed in Latin America, Asia, and Africa, those worlds that were Christianized primarily as a result of European colonialism. For each, there is a question how to re-contextualize Christianity in an alternative community, especially a community marginalized and oppressed by those very people who brought the Gospel, and also a community with distinct and different cultural traditions from those of Western European Christians.

I

The re-contextualization of theology arises in a somewhat different way for women. Unlike subordinated races who have preserved some remnants of an alternative culture from a period prior to their enslavement, the subordination of women takes place at the heart of every culture and thus deprives women of an alternative culture with which to express their identity over against the patriarchal culture of family and society. Some cultures give women distinct religious rituals and cults and quasi-autonomous social and economic groupings, providing some basis for a women's culture or "sub-culture." But even these female groupings remain largely invisible to the public culture, defined as male

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culture. Western Protestant Christian society since the Reformation has largely eliminated separate female religious communities, such as women's religious orders. Female guilds also largely disappeared in early modern Europe. Protestant women reinvented many women's groups in the nineteenth century, but the price of integration into the dominant church and educational systems has tended in recent times to mean the elimination of these separate women's organizations.

The question of Christian identity rooted in the Bible is also raised in a more radical way for feminists than it is for ethnic liberation theologies. Black Theology, Asian, and Hispanic theology tend to see their conflicts with Christianity as going back four or five hundred years with the rise of those forms of racism, colonialism, and slave economies that shaped their particular group into an exploited and dependent folk. The Bible, on the other hand, is seen as a positive side of a liberation gospel that can be used to criticize this later church tradition. For American blacks, this confidence in the Bible as a document that is "on their side" comes from identifying themselves with Israel, the people enslaved by Pharoah and liberated by God.

Forgotten is the question that sorely plagued nineteenth century abolitionists, namely, that the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, is predominately "pro-slavery" in the literal sense of both taking a slave society for granted and also justifying it for Israel and for the church. Since slavery was an integral part of the patriarchal family, as it was understood in the Bible, the same passages that justify the subordination of women also justify the maintenance of the master-slave relationship. If contemporary black American theology dealt with the integral relationship of sexism, paternalism, and slavery within patriarchy, it might find itself closer to the questions and issues of feminist theology.

For women, it is clear that the Bible is a patriarchal document that both assumes throughout an androcentric perspective, in which the male is the normative human person and interlocutor with God, and which explicitly justifies the subordination of women by myths of women's intrinsic inferiority, dependency, and sinfulness. The liberation texts that marginated ethnic and economic groups draw upon as their biblical basis do not address the surbordination of women within patriarchy as such, but arise from the consciousness of males within economically and ethnically deprived groups. Thus, the application of such texts to the liberation of women involves a more radical translation and re-contextualization where not merely the actors but the sorts of social systems addressed have changed.

II

Women, faced with the androcentrism and misogyny of the Bible, ask in a much more radical way the question whether it is possible to be feminist and Christian. Some feminists have resolved this conflict in the negative. For them, it is patently clear that the Bible, and the two major religions that spring from it, as well as other historical religions, such as

Islam, have, as their essential agenda, the subordination of women. "If God is male, the male is God," Mary Daly put it succinctly some years ago. Patriarchal religion is the way that male domination sacralizes itself by making God and all the religious symbols of the divine-human relationship into sacred reiterations of the male domination and female subordination.

Some women attempt to retrieve an alternative cultural base by seeking repressed, female-identified religions from some period before the rise of patriarchy. By claiming that these pre-patriarchal goddess religions survived in subcultures on the margins of Christianity in pagan groups villified as "witches" by the church, and correlating this alternative culture with feminist consciousness today, goddess feminists construct a "lost history" of the religion and culture of women's religion which they see as "rising again" in their own movements.

Other feminists are less sure that such an alternative culture and religion is available in this way. The story of the pre-patriarchal women's religion seems more like the *in illo tempore* of an attractive myth than real history. What they can recover of the religions of ancient goddess worshippers and late medieval women accused of witchcraft does not sound very much like women's liberation. Moreover, they are unwilling to surrender the biblical texts about justice and redemption, however much women may have been ignored in those texts. But that means that they must continually wrestle with the basis for their efforts to synthesize feminism and Christianity into a distinctively new cultural expression.

Does a feminist, liberation Christianity simply operate out of a hermeneutical circle of biblical texts which have some justice perspective and contemporary women's experience? Or must one throw the net of cultural sources and resources more widely? Can one explore marginated Christian groups condemned as "heresies," such as gnostics, Montanists, and others who seem to have female symbols of divinity and gave greater religious authority to women? Can one explore non-biblical religions with female images of the divine and enter into dialogue with Goddess religionists today? Can one write new stories out of women's religious experience today and make them paradigmatic for our religious consciousness? In short, given the poverty of the official Christian tradition for symbols and stories affirmative of women, why should women set any cultural limits to their search for alternative sources for their liberation?

Although the feminist version of this issue is particularly obvious, this ambiguity exists also in other forms of liberation theology that seek to contextualize themselves in the older cultures that were swept aside by Western European Christian proselytizing. Latin Christianity, as it was shaped into its successful form in the late patristic period, was a synthesis of New Testament faith and Greco-Roman culture, particularly philosophical culture. Moreover, the church shaped itself institutionally by modeling itself after the political institutions of the Roman

empire. Both as an organization and as a culture, Western Christianity made itself in the model of an imperialist society that claimed for its culture universal normativeness. To seek a liberation Christianity is to turn around that process by which the Christian church identified itself within an imperial ruling class over slaves, women, and conquered peoples. To seek an indigenous Christianity in the context of Asian culture, African culture, or Native American culture is to dissolve that process by which Christianity identified its normative cultural vehicle in a philosophical tradition that began with Plato.

These two agendas, liberation and cultural indigenization, do not always mix easily. Latin Americans, who were the pioneers in Third World liberation theology, come from a European Christian ruling class who suppressed and largely destroyed the indigenous culture. Thus, it was easier for them to raise the question of liberation without the accompanying question of indigenization in older non-Christian cultures. There are some Latin American liberation theologians, however, who seek to relate the preferential option for the poor with the folk religion of the poor and soon find themselves in a world beneath the notice of the educated European ruling classes where remnants of ancient pre-Christian culture survive.

For Asians and Africans, this question is more insistent because, for them, the non-Christian religions and cultures are very much alive, and they, as Christians, are a minority among their own people. So, necessarily, they must speak both of a liberation theology and of an indigenous theology that takes seriously a dialogue and perhaps even a new synthesis with non-Christian culture.

III

The conflict between these two agendas was illustrated for me recently during a conference on religious education for liberation held at the Protestant Theological Seminary in Matanzas, Cuba. One prominent group in the mainly Presbyterian faculty was strongly identified with a liberation theology rooted in the dialogue between Marxism and Christianity. For them, Marxism contained, in secular form, many themes rooted in the critical prophetic tradition of the Bible. One might suggest that there may be some interesting affinity here between Marxism and Calvinism, specifically with the Calvinist traditions of predestination, zealous public enforcement of morality, and the work ethic. For the Christian Marxists, the atheism of Marxism can be understood as an unconscious criticism, not of true biblical religion, but of an idolatrous religion that identified God with the power of the ruling classes.

Another section of the faculty, while no less supportive of the revolution, wanted to go beyond this synthesis of Calvinist Christianity and Marxism. These faculty members tended to be more open to the Spanish Catholic heritage of Cuba, but, more particularly, they sought a sympathetic hearing for Afro-Cuban spiritism or *Santería*, a Yoruba

religion thinly veiled by Catholic saints which is the major folk religion of most Cubans, especially those of African descent. It was clear that the tension between these two agendas of liberation and indigenization were very deep and volatile within the faculty. For Calvinist-Marxists, comfortable with a liberation critique of the "idolatry" of the religion of the ruling classes, conversation with other "idolaters," Spanish Catholic or African, was scarcely imaginable. For the second group, it was clear that a new Cuban Christianity must not simply adopt an ideology of revolution, but must seek a new cultural synthesis based on the whole of the Cuban historical experience. The difference between these two perspectives was more than an intellectual difference. It was almost a wholly different sense of being. One has a sense that these two groups were speaking out of different "sides of the brain." What was fascinating was simply that they managed to coexist on the same faculty at all.

IV

Feminists tend to have a deep suspicion of dichotomized ways of thought and behavior. Whenever two apparently opposite and mutually exclusive options are set in conflict, our suspicion is that some larger context where both have their place has been lost. And so it is with the apparently irreconcilable differences between a biblically-based feminist liberation theology and a feminist spirituality based on a revival of the religion of the Goddess. One suspects that at work here are two different modes of being that have been dichotomized in Western culture and need to find a new whole.

Certainly, for me, the biblical liberation tradition is essential to my feminist (and not just my Christian) identity. It cannot be discarded simply because it has been formulated in an androcentric and ethnocentric optic. It is in these biblical texts that we find the basic shift in the social location of religion which delegitimates all religion functioning as the sacral ideology of the ruling classes, by locating the word and will of God on the side of the oppressed and despised of history. The denunciation of social practices which "grind the faces of the poor and deprive the widow and the orphan" is elaborated in the prophets and the Gospels into a critique of religion as well; not just a critique of other people's religion, but a critique of the deformation of biblical religion itself into forms and rituals that sacralize social oppression, the privileges of religious and social elites, and which ignores God's agenda of justice and mercy.

This denunciation of oppression and oppressive religion is complemented in prophetic theology by an annunciation of a new social order, a new humanity, a new heaven and earth where "everyone will sit under their own vine and fig tree and none will be afraid"; where "the lion will lie down with the lamb and the little child will lead them"; where "none will hurt and destroy in all my Holy Mountain"; where all creation will be at peace. Even now, God is at work in history to rend and to heal, to "put the mighty down from their thrones and to lift up the lowly."

This pattern of prophetic theology is precious to all concerned with social liberation because it is the cultural prototype of all such movements in Western society. Feminism, too, partakes, even if unawares, of this same cultural pattern in which the denunciation of systems of injustice, and their supporting ideologies, and the annunciation of a new vision of liberation, and a historical project of change, are appropriated and applied to the issues of sexism, patriarchal ideologies of women's inferiority, and hopes and prospects for a new humanity of women and men liberated from gender hierarchy.

But this language of ethical struggle and judgment presupposes an alienated world in conflict between a distorted and evil present reality and a lost option pointing to an imagined future. By contrast, those "nature" religions suppressed by biblical religions and dubbed by them "pagan" (a word which actually means "the countryside," although Jews and Christians have invested it with the meaning of "idolaters" and "demon-worshippers"), often seem to preserve elements of a mode of being where humanity and nature, body and mind, male and female, have not parted company, but remain in the dreaming innocence of an unfallen world. In these religions, the cycles of the seasons and the planets, the rhythms of the body, are the clues to harmonious relationship with ourselves, each other, and the world around us, and with the Great Mother who sustains us all. Harvest homes, winter and summer solstice celebrations, vernal and autumnal equinoxes, puberty and menopause rites, sustain a world where ritual harmonizes rather than dichotomizes the relationship to the reality in and around us.

A feminist liberation theology needs to be able to speak both words. Since patriarchy, with its many forms and expressions of alienation and oppression, still very much shapes our minds and social systems, one cannot pretend to live in an innocent world of the childhood of humanity where all that is is good. One needs to engage in the struggle against evil and to have an ethical language for our denunciation and our hope. But one needs also those foretastes of unalienated life that allow us to enter into the promised land and to taste its presence. The feminist dialogue between biblical and pagan spiritualities seems to me to be seeking a way to bring those two modes of being into right relationship with each other. In so doing, it perhaps seeks to heal the most basic and ancient split of human culture and existence.

INTERCULTURAL THEOLOGY

By Walter J. Hollenweger

"Intercultural theology is not just something that might be useful for students from the Third World, but it is part and parcel of any theology that pretends to be scholarly. . . . Our cultural presuppositions define what is scholarship and what is not."

In the autumn of 1984, four hundred professors of theology, mainly from central Europe, came together for a conference in Zurich. The topic of the conference was the important issue on the tension between "Institution and Charisma"—a topic of relevance not only for European but also for worldwide theology. But the most up-to-date example the speakers could find for their topic was the German poet, Hoelderlin (1770–1843). Now, Hoelderlin is indeed relevant to the issue in question. In fact, there is a bridge between the nature-spirituality of Hoelderlin and some of the questions timidly asked by many Third World theologians, namely the revelation of God in nature, the place and role of dreams and visions in theology, the relationship between matter and spirit, body and soul, and therefore also the function of public liturgy for the healing community of the church, the relationship between our traditional theology and pre-Christian tradition. But these issues were hardly touched.

If such applications and extensions of Hoelderlin for today's important issues had been pursued, we would need to search for a new type of theology—a theology in which the whole people of God have a say in theological decision-making. It is by now clear that we have to integrate into our research the charism of the poet, the gift of story-telling and its critical analysis, the gift of dreams and visions with their interpretation, the gift of healing by prayer or paranormal media and the modern medical tradition (this latter is particularly important in view of the plight of our mechanistic approach to health and sickness, not only in the Third World, but also in the West).

A truly universal and ecumenical theology must be intercultural. By intercultural theology, I mean that theological discipline which operates

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on the basis of the following presuppositions:

(1) All theologies are contextually conditioned.
(2) There is nothing wrong with theology being contextually conditioned.
(3) It may take others to show us how conditioned, parochial, or ideologically captive our own theology is.
(4) Even if once we could ignore such voices, now we can no longer do so.
(5) The point of contact between our traditions and the new theologies from the Third World is Scripture.
(6) Only in creative tension with the widest possible perspective can we develop theologies appropriate to our own particular situations.
(7) Since within the church the ultimate loyalty is not simply to nation, class, or culture, the universal church is uniquely suited to provide the context in which the task of creative theologizing can take place.

Intercultural theology is not just something that might be useful for students from the Third World, but it is part and parcel of any theology that pretends to be scholarly. Let us try to illustrate what is involved here by constructing a "midrash" describing the discovery of American black spirituality by a European theologian (Bonhoeffer). The form of a midrash has been chosen because I want to present the search for intercultural theology in a way that is understandable both to black and white theologians, to academic theologians and to people who want to contribute to the theological decision-making process without being forced to use the jargon of theological academia.

I

One of the most striking examples of the value of intercultural theology for Western theologians is Dietrich Bonhoeffer. The decisive insight for Bonhoeffer was his discovery that the church transcends the boundaries of class, race, and nation. He came to this insight through his negative experience in a nationalist German church (which in his view was a contradiction in terms) and through the positive experience of his ecumenical contacts, among them his discovery of the black churches in New York City. Bonhoeffer was the first—and, for at least forty years, the only—theologian who saw the political and theological relevance of the spirituality of these black churches.

The following midrash is an attempt at doing theology for and with the whole people of God. It follows a narrative structure without giving up the critical dimension which any real theology must entail, and it is based on Bonhoeffer's notes and my own personal knowledge and experience.[1] The whole sequence is what I would call a true story, although invented.

[1]Bonhoeffer, "Bericht über den Studienaufenthalt im Union Theological Seminary zu New York 1930/31," *Gesammelte Schriften* I (Munich 1958), 84–103. On the black churches, see p. 97. See also Ulrich Duchrow, "Kann Bonhoeffers gelebte Lehre von der Kirche in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland rezipiert werden," in Christofer Frey and Wolfgang Huber (eds.), *Schöpferische Nachfolge. Festschrift für Heinz Eduard Tödt* (Heidelberg, 1978), p. 394.

When Bonhoeffer arrived at the Church of God in Christ in Harlem, the service had already begun. A young black sang:

> When the Holy Ghost fills you,
> You can smile.
> When the blood of Jesus cleanses you,
> You can smile.
> When you feel like the Baptist . . . .

Here he interrupted his singing and commented: "Brothers and sisters, you know John the Baptist, the one who had to eat locusts and wild honey. When you feel like the Baptist . . . ," and the whole congregation joined him:

> You can smile.
> When your heart is full of sadness,
> You can smile.

The choir, clothed in long, bright gowns, took up the theme "You can smile." Two drummers took up the rhythm, first very softly: "You can, you can, yes, you can smile." The choir joined in with full harmony and strong syncopation as the drummers made the sticks dance on the drums. "You can smile." The soloist sang the next stanza:

> When they stare at you because you are black,
> You can smile.

"Hallelujah, you can smile." The choir began to move and danced with short, rhythmical steps up the aisle into the church nave. Half the congregation stood up and sang. "Yes, Lord, you can smile."

> When the Ku Klux Klan threatens you with fire,
> You can smile.
> When the Black Power people call you a coward,
> You can smile.

A black man who had so far watched the service in silence, stood up. It must be the pastor. Bonhoeffer saw that, in contrast to the choir, he did not wear either a cassock or a gown. "Brothers and sisters," he said, "we have a guest among us. A Lutheran pastor from Germany." Bonhoeffer looked around. Did he mean him? "We ask our Lutheran guest to come forward and to join us on the platform." "What shall I do?" thought Bonhoeffer. But he went forward, and the black Christians broke out in long and cheerful applause.

"You know," the pastor continued, "some weeks ago I was invited by the Council of Churches of New York to a meeting. The Catholics had also sent a priest and there were some secretaries from the National Federation of Christian Churches, and many other denominations were there. We asked the chairman of the New York Council of Churches: "Why did you never invite us to your meetings?" And the chairman said: "We are very sorry, we did not know that you existed." The whole congregation laughed. "Dr. Bonhoeffer, welcome to our service. You surely know that we exist. What do you have to tell us?" The congregation said, "Praise the Lord," and applauded again.

Bonhoeffer was taken by surprise. What should he say? Fortunately, these black people sang another hymn. It was one of those famous spirituals about the final liberation of all people. Superficially, it was a hymn about heaven: "I'm going to lay down my heavy load." Bonhoeffer listened carefully. The pastor asked, "What, brothers and sisters, shall we lay down?" And in full harmony the congregation replied: "I'm going to lay down my heavy load." An elderly black woman sang the next stanza. "I know my robe's going to fit me well. I've tried it on at the gates of hell." And again the whole congregation joined in: "I'm going to lay down my heavy load."

Bonhoeffer thought: How true. We stand at the gates of hell. But the assurance of a coming morning gives us strength. Unbidden, a prayer rose in him: "Thy kingdom come." But he also thought of his teachers in Germany and of his colleagues who tried in clever formulations to justify the Nazi policy of aggression. And he thought of those Lutheran theologians who tried to keep out of the struggle by making correct, yet irrelevant, definitions of the Holy Spirit. It was almost laughable. These black Christians here did not need any speeches on the Holy Spirit. They experienced the Spirit. But what should he tell them? He did not think that he had anything to say, at least not for the moment.

When the hymn was finished, the pastor asked Bonhoeffer to come to the pulpit. Bonhoeffer stood up. "Brothers and sisters"—he was just beginning to understand the meaning of this way of addressing the church—"brothers and sisters, I want to thank you for your invitation. I hear your songs and your prayers. I do not know them and cannot sing them, and I do not know your prayers." (In fact, he thought, that was not quite true. But he could not tell them what was troubling him about the gates of hell in Germany, about the blacks in his country who were not only oppressed but killed.) "But I thank you for your spirituals. That is all."

He sat down. The congregation was a little astonished. The pastor understood the situation right away. "Brothers and sisters, Dr. Bonhoeffer is a German theologian. And, you know, theologians usually speak with a paper in front of them on which is written their speech. You must understand that's what they learn at the university." Everybody laughed. "Give him a hand," he said finally, and all clapped their hands.

"Yes, brothers and sisters," the pastor continued, "we shall wonder, wonder and marvel, when we once shall overcome, when all the saints are marching into the city of golden streets . . . ." He had hardly finished when a trombone began to play: "Oh, when the saints . . . ." In many variations, the music came from all sides: "Oh, when the saints, oh when the saints, oh when the saints come marching in." And again they stood up and danced and marched through the church.

"Brothers and sisters," an old grey-haired black continued the theme, "when the saints march into the new Jerusalem, do you think there will be Catholic saints, Lutheran saints, Pentecostal saints?" "No, no," the people shouted. "Will there be black saints and white saints?" And again the whole congregation shouted, "No, no." "No," the preacher said in a hoarse voice, which cut right through the whole building. "No, there will only be saints. Saints who have washed their garments. Hallelujah! But some of us will marvel, I tell you. In heaven, we will marvel even more than down here. You know, in heaven it will become clear, very clear indeed, what we worship. Whether we worship Jesus, the manual worker, Jesus, our savior, or whether we worship our own fears and our own impulses. Yes, brothers and sisters, it will become clear whether we worship our own race, our nation, our money—even if we do not have much of it, praise God—or whether we worship Jesus. I wouldn't be a bit surprised if, on the Last Judgment Day, all white people would be confronted with a black Jesus . . . ." The preacher stopped. There was dead silence in the church. Everybody looked at Bonhoeffer. The preacher continued, "Yes, brothers and sisters, I wouldn't be surprised in the least if all white people would be confronted with a black Jesus, and all black people with a white Jesus. Let us pray."

Bonhoeffer folded his hands. But these black Christians had obviously a different understanding of prayer from his, for they began to sing again. Bonhoeffer did not know whether they invented the song or whether it was a song known to them. Anyhow, they did not use a hymnal. They asked for God's blessing for their work, for their church. They made a special stanza in which they prayed for their German guest and his students and then for a whole verse they simply sang "Amen." Bonhoeffer did not know whether white Christians would perhaps meet a black Christ on the Last Day of Judgment. Possibly. But surely Aryan Christians would then meet a Jewish Christ.

This midrash is one way of describing how Bonhoeffer reached the certainty that the church is a community which stands against all human divisions whether by Americans, Germans, or Africans.[2] This is documented in the catechism which he wrote after his return from his first visit to the United States. It looked so old-fashioned to the English translators that they did not bother to include it in their collection of Bonhoeffer's works. But on closer examination, one finds that this catechism takes a decisive step toward a new and politically explosive ecclesiology. There is, for instance, the question: "What is the church's position on family and nation?" Answer: "The church recognizes them as God's gift but she also knows that *the Holy Spirit* is a stronger bond than the bonds of blood and of a common national history. In the church there is neither master nor slave, neither man or woman, *neither Jew nor German.* They are all one in Christ" (I Tim. 4:4; Gal. 3:28). The political implications of this catechism contradicted Nazi law, and, in the situation of 1936, this could only be seen as subversive. Bonhoeffer went further and added a paragraph which had never been included in a Lutheran catechism before, namely the question: "What is the church's position over against an unjust authority?"[3] Later in prison he came to the conclusion that in the twentieth century, Luther would have had to say the contrary of what he had said in the sixteenth century in order to say the same thing about the church's position vis à vis the state.[4]

So, it can be said that the belief in, and the "true myth" of, a universal and catholic church was the basis for Bonhoeffer's involvement in the German church struggle and finally in subversive revolutionary action.[5]

[2]Bonhoeffer, "Ansprache, Herbst 1930 in New York," *Gesammelte Schriften,* I, pp. 67f.; ET: *No Rusty Swords* (London, 1970), pp. 73f.

II

Bonhoeffer is by now, of course, a standard theologian to be read and studied. But my impression is that his basic commitment to the whole and universal people of God has not been taken seriously enough. I remember a high-powered discussion on Third World theologies with doctoral students at a German university. Half of them were German, the other half came from the Third World. With great conviction, the German students competently discussed cultural imperialism, colonialism, and exploitation at some length. After two hours, I asked them: "Has it not occurred to you that the Third World students present here have so far not taken part in the discussion?" It had not occurred to them. Perplexed, they asked me: "Why is this, since we so eagerly discuss their issues?" Ask them yourselves," I replied. "Well," said the Third World students, "the language which you use does not allow us to join in the discussion." By language, they did not mean "the German language" as all of them knew German quite well. By "language" they meant the specific scholarly terminology which we use in such discussions. "If we apply what we say to our own theological methodology," I resumed the discussion, "then we have to use a language which allows those about whom we talk to join in." "Well," said the Germans, "if we use that kind of language, we will never get our Ph.D." "So be it. What is more important, to be faithful to our commitment or to the conventions of academic culture? How can we expect exporters, industrialists, politicians, and bankers to risk their careers by adapting to Third World needs if we are not prepared to risk our academic standing by using a language which is appropriate to our topic?"

To take intercultural theology seriously entails a great many difficulties and pitfalls which I can demonstrate on the basis of my own experience. I am engaged mainly, but not exclusively, in training future

[3]*Gesammelte Schriften* III, 362f., italics mine.

[4]Bonhoeffer, Letter to his parents, 31.10.1943, *Widerstand und Ergebung* (Munich, 1970), p. 141; ET: *Letters and Papers* (London, 1971), p. 123.

[5]For a fuller discussion on Bonhoeffer, see W.J. Hollenweger, "Umgang mit Mythen," *Interkulturelle Theologie,* II (Munich, 1982), pp. 15–29.

theological teachers particularly for the Third World. I look for three things:

(1) Originality.
(2) Work which is relevant to *their* context, the country, the culture, the society to which they go or from which they come.
(3) Familiarity with the research conventions at a European university.

It is immediately obvious that (2) and (3) can be in conflict. And that is what is happening in many Third World theological institutions and in European and American universities where Third World theologians are trained. Kwesi A. Dickson, a professor at the University of Ghana, writes: "African theologians continue to mouth the theological platitudes they have picked up in universities, theological seminaries, and colleges abroad, or parade their erudition by quoting the latest theological ideas in Europe and North America. In consequence, theological education in Africa has generally had the effect of producing theologians who are more at home in Western theological thought even if such thought pertains only to a certain level of their consciousness. True, one cannot ignore what has gone before, even if it has come out of other contexts. Nevertheless, it cannot be seriously argued that in the interests of a uniformity of theological expression, and as a symbol of the oneness of the church, the theological insights emanating from the West should be considered normative also outside the West."[6]

Dickson notes that all theological expression is tied to English, French, or Portuguese and therefore—since these languages are foreign languages in almost all African countries—remains a foreign affair. It leads to a situation where the church suffers under a devastating and unbiblical division of labor: here the producers of theology, the clergy; and there the consumers, the laity. No wonder that some of the better trained lay people are no longer interested in this kind of theology, since they are mainly considered as sources of income and not as theological partners and experts of applied theology. A situation, of course, which we know only too well in the West.

Many of our students come from these theological institutions in the Third World, where they have been indoctrinated to accept all scholarship from abroad, and despite their own cultural and religious background. So it takes some of them a long time to believe that we really expect them to produce their own indigenous and intercultural theology.

But if they then take the challenge seriously and replace European-American systematic coherence with what is considered coherent in their culture, problems arise. Here are a few examples:

(1) One of the most creative theologians from Asia is Kosuke Koyama, now at Union Seminary in New York. But if he had presented one of his books to any of our universities, he would surely have failed

[6]Dickson, Kwesi A., *Theology in Africa* (London, 1984), p. 4.

because *his* understanding of scholarship and consistency clashes with ours.

(2) We do not have to go as far as Asia. Some of the most pertinent examples are right on our doorstep. One of the most important and creative theological books which was written at the beginning of our century is Karl Barth's *Commentary on Romans*. It introduced a new era of theology. But if he had presented this commentary to any university, he would have been failed. Consequently, Barth never boasted of an earned doctorate.

(3) Let me give an even better example. The Gospel of Mark is a seminal piece of theological writing, highly original, highly relevant, but unfortunately it would never be accepted even as an M.A. dissertation for the following reasons:

(a) Mark never defines what he means by "Gospel" in spite of the fact that he uses the term and form of the gospel in a novel way.
(b) Mark does not identify his sources.
(c) Mark does not discuss his hermeneutical method, although he has, of course, a hidden methodology.
(d) Mark draws no conclusion. He obviously thinks readers intelligent enough to draw their own conclusion. Copyists then added two conclusions, but by doing this they only added to confusion.

One might object that these examples are taken from other cultures (Asian, Swiss, Hellenistic). To use their methods—which may be acceptable in their culture—in our culture is inadmissible. Well, this is exactly the difficulty. Translated into plain English it means: Our cultural presuppositions define what is scholarship and what is not.

III

Classical theology is important on a universal level because it provides the tools to understand the traditions of the past, in particular the biblical traditions. But we will maneuver ourselves into a glorious offside position if we continue to handle these tools in a way that is neither relevant to our own lay people or to the emerging theologians of the Third World. More dangerously, we will miss important insights and impulses which come to us from the oral spiritualities of the Third World and the narrative structure of their theology (so akin to biblical theology and the religious experiences of first generation Christians). These newly converted Christians are important to the religiously starving people of the West, many of whom are prepared to drink from any dubious religious well. Would it not be better if we could return together to the springs of our common Christian tradition, combine story *and* analysis, dream *and* critical interpretations, for theological articulation?

IN PRAISE OF SHAKY GROUND: THE LIMINAL CHRIST AND CULTURAL PLURALISM

By Mark Kline Taylor

"The Christ symbol expresses and *creates Christian existence lived within, but at the margins of, at the* limen *of, its own cultural and linguistic worlds. The Christian's liminal existence involves an affirmation of the culturally other and, ultimately, of all those who are most severely marginalized, 'made other' by the dynamics and structures of oppression."*

WE are becoming more honest in responding to the realities of religious and cultural plurality. This honesty leads to the pluralist's suspicion: "a common intellectual ground just does not seem to exist."[1] Stubborn quests for common ground are increasingly criticized by philosophers. Described under the rubric of "foundationalism," such positions are argued to have a preoccupation with a common foundation that does not take with full seriousness the culturally and linguistically relative character of one's normative foundations.[2] Persistent claims that some perspective must be foundational in the midst of our culturally plural world have been traced to Descartes and diagnosed as the West's "Cartesian anxiety."[3] This is no mere malady of the philosopher's guild, nor one element in an intramural, academic debate. It has also been suggested as a major source of a whole civilization's struggle with nuclearism.[4]

No wonder, then, that the pluralist's suspicion has been felt and voiced by important Christian theologians—Protestant and Roman Catholic. Among Catholic scholars, the critiques of foundationalism

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[1]Harold Coward, *Pluralism: Challenge to World Religions* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1985), p. 103.

[2]Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), pp. 131–39, 315–94.

[3]Richard J. Bernstein, *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism: Science, Hermeneutics and Praxis* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983), pp. 16–20.

[4]Gibson Winter, "Hope for the Earth: A Hermeneutic of Nuclearism in Ecumenical Perspective," *Religion and Intellectual Life* 1 (Spring 1984).

have become an explicit problem in Francis Schüssler Fiorenza's recent reformulation of foundational theology. But his reformulation does not dodge the hard fact of cultural plurality. "No external standard, be it history or human experience," he writes, "exists independent of cultural traditions and social interpretation that can provide an independent foundation for either faith or theology."[5]

Among Protestant theologians, George Lindbeck's widely acclaimed *The Nature of Doctrine* provides a vision of the theological task consistent with the pluralist's suspicion. Lindbeck is suspicious of theologians who would still write as if there were some common experiential touchstone for the theologian facing cultural and religious differences. A fresh program of theology emerges from his acknowledgment that every religious experience and theological doctrine is specific to systems of language and culture. Lindbeck's book is another manifestation of our pluralistic time's disclaimer regarding "common ground," its confession of particularity, and its critique of foundationalism.

This essay proposes a way for christology to articulate its traditional concerns in relation to the fact of cultural plurality.[6] Taking this plurality seriously does not mean that we simply have new topics to consider. Rather, cultural plurality compels careful reflection on two difficult issues in christology: (1) the very nature of our confessing Jesus as "the Christ," and (2) the relationship of this confession to experiences of cultural plurality. The first issue can be addressed by viewing Christ as symbol. Then we can turn to the second issue by comparing cultural anthropology's experiences of cultural plurality with the subject matter of christology.

The proposal arising out of these explorations is that the Christ symbol expresses *and* creates Christian existence lived within, but at the margins of, at the *limen* of, its own cultural and linguistic worlds. The Christian's liminal existence involves an affirmation of the culturally other and, ultimately, an affirmation of all those who are most severely marginalized, "made other" by the dynamics and structures of oppression. Because the Christ symbol nurtures both affirmations, a final section suggests how a Christian pluralist's affirmation of cultural differences can actually provide important orientations for responding to oppression.

I

For some, to view Christ as "symbol" is to perpetuate the foundationalism that a pluralist suspicion often laments. The concern of

[5]Francis Schüssler Fiorenza, *Foundational Theology: Jesus and the Church* (New York: Crossroad, 1984), p. 289.

[6]Consistent pluralists must acknowledge that their own reception of plurality as "fact" is itself mediated by cultural and institutional processes. For one framework by which to analyze academic subcultures for which cultural plurality is a fact, see Mary Douglas, "Cultural Bias," *Occasional Paper No. 34* (London: Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, 1978), pp. 6–13, 21.

Lindbeck, for example, is that christological doctrine becomes a symbolic expression of some "common core experience." On Lindbeck's reading, this is a reduction of doctrine to "nondiscursive symbolisms."[7] Though this is possible, I advocate no such reduction here. To the contrary, a full appreciation of theories of the symbolic function allows us to glimpse the many facets of Christians' confessing Jesus as Christ, and in a way that highlights both the *particularity* of that confession and also its more universal, *world-engaging* significance. Naming Jesus "the Christ" is symbolic in four senses.

In a first sense, the term "symbols" can be used to mean the privileged images that pervade an author's texts, or the persistent figures in which a whole group or culture recognizes itself.[8] In this broadest sense, to take Christ as symbol is to say that Christ is in some way pervasive and constitutive for Christian faith, theology, and practice insofar as it is Christian. By reason of its very pervasiveness, precise meanings of the Christ symbol, in this sense, remain elusive. Christ functions as symbol in this broadest sense when theologians refer to "the Christ event," that happening, that "sheer fact" that is definitive for Christianity.[9]

As essential as this first mark of the symbol is, it hardly exhausts the senses of the symbolic. A second sense is its invented or constructed character. Symbols are not reflections in people of things outside them, but creations of interpreters who interact with and who are embedded in complexes of perceptions and experiences. These are not just passive images of something given, but, in an important sense, created by people themselves.[10]

Recent christologists have repeatedly emphasized the constructive character of the christological confession. From the very beginning, it has been a creative and interpretive one. However much Jesus may be viewed as somehow historically available, as concrete and human, confessing that this Jesus is "the Christ" makes the confession a human one that involves what Schubert Ogden has called an existential point.[11] The creative and interpretive nature of the confession has been evident in many ways, performed by the apostolic witnesses, the New Testament scriptures, its redactors, by the traditions of creed, worship, and doctrine through which Christians claim knowledge of Jesus and confess him as Christ.

A third mark of the symbol makes more explicit the kind of creative interpretation that the christological confession is. Symbols are also

[7]George A. Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984), p. 78.

[8]Paul Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning* (Ft. Worth, Tx: Texas Christian University Press, 1976), p. 53.

[9]David Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism* (New York: Crossroad, 1981), pp. 233–35, 248–49.

[10]Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, Vol. I: Language* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), p. 75.

[11]Schubert M. Ogden, *The Point of Christology* (New York: Harper and Row, 1982), pp. 20–40.

intrinsically bound up with interpreters' places in cultural and linguistic settings as these are also in interaction with other cultural and linguistic settings. Symbolic approaches to christology that do not highlight the cultural-linguistic mediation of the Christ symbol risk reducing it to individualist, existential concerns. The literature in the social sciences and philosophy of religion clearly stresses that symbols are always embodied in cultural, linguistic, social, and institutional practices of communal life.[12]

Many different Christian thinkers have offered reflections with a keen consciousness of how the christological confession is culturally and linguistically mediated. This consciousness is evident in Hans Frei's emphasis on the language of realistic narrative,[13] in Paul Ricoeur's theory of narrative (which is explicitly related to a theory of symbolic forms as cultural process),[14] in Lindbeck's emphasis on the grammatical rules of the Christian story that form life in the Christian community,[15] and in Edward Farley's stress on ecclesial life as the essential corporate matrix of belief in Jesus Christ.[16] In one way or another, accenting culture and language in different ways, each of these writers acknowledges that the Christ symbol is not primarily an isolable image, but a cultural or linguistic system.

Each of these first three senses of the symbolic, when applied to the Christ symbol, highlight and intensify its particularity. In its most pervasive and broadest sense, as in "Christ event," it is relative to Christian faith and religious practice. Insofar as it is a creative construct, it is particular to the interpreter or set of interpreters that confesses it of Jesus. And as mediated by cultural-linguistic settings, it is particular to the specific social nexus within which the confession occurs.

A fourth sense of the symbolic, however, without denying the particularity of the Christ symbol, allows it to be viewed also as world-engaging. The Christ symbol, especially as mediated by the narratives of the New Testament, has what Ricoeur terms a "reference." It is this reference that allows us to take up the question of the relation of Christ, however diverse and particular a symbol it may be, to the world that for us is marked by cultural plurality.

For Ricoeur, the reference of a narrative text is the "possible world"

[12]See, for example, Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology* (New York: Pantheon, 1982), pp. xix–xx.

[13]Hans Frei, *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative: A Study in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Hermeneutics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), pp. 13–14, and *The Identity of Jesus Christ: The Hermeneutical Bases of Dogmatic Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), pp. 86–152.

[14]Paul Ricoeur, "Biblical Hermeneutics," *Semeia* 4(1975), pp. 37–73, and Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, Vol. 1, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), pp. 52–82.

[15]Lindbeck, pp. 79–84.

[16]Edward Farley, *Ecclesial Man: A Social Phenomenology of Faith and Reality* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), pp. 172–85.

created by the plot's narrative portrayal of agents and circumstances.[17] This possible world also includes a possible way of orienting oneself within it.[18] Linguistic devices of narrative and metaphor function to open for readers a comprehensive world that includes both linguistic and non-linguistic dimensions.[19] The New Testament narratives, in particular, invoke linguistic images that are "odd," provoke total commitment, and so refer to "limit-experiences" or "boundary situations" in the world. This reference, generated in the complex play of interpreter and text, is best described as occurring "in front of the text," rather than "behind" or "in" the text.

What becomes of the christological narrative's reference to the world when the world is frankly taken to be a culturally plural one? Does the Christ symbol "refer" to experiences that make sense only within its particular cultural-linguistic world? Does it refer to some other cultural-linguistic setting? Or does it refer to the totality of cultural linguistic worlds that present themselves to us? I suggest it refers, primarily, to none of these. It refers, instead, to a particular kind of limit-experience in our culturally plural world, one in which we give place to the other worlds "as other." The Christ symbol's reference, then, is to a realm that is interstitial, "liminal" to the plurality of cultural-linguistic worlds. Let me lend initial cogency to this proposal by turning to our experiences of cultural plurality. What signs are there of such interstitial or liminal worlds to which the Christ symbol might refer?

II

In a time when cultural plurality is widely recognized, it is important not simply to presuppose it, but to examine it. Examining the intercultural experiences of comparative religionists, some missionaries, and cultural anthropologists generally confirms the suspicions about common ground. There is no "ground" to provide a norm for communication across cultural boundaries that is independent of that communicative encounter. There is, however, a shifting terrain for intercultural communication that is significantly more than the relativist abyss some fear to be the consequence of denying common ground.

This shifting terrain can be depicted by discussion of some cultural anthropologists' experience of cross-cultural encounter. I select cultural anthropology not because comparative religion or missionary encounter are necessarily unproductive for my purposes. Indeed, they are.[20] I make this selection because anthropology has a history of accenting difference by its developed theory of "culture." Shortly after the turn of this century, this theory led increasingly to stress on the plurality of

[17]Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor: Multi-Disciplinary Studies of the Creation of Meaning in Language* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), p. 218.
[18]Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory*, pp. 61–64.
[19]*Ibid.*
[20]Cf. James Clifford, *Person and Myth: Maurice Leenhardt in the Melanesian World* (Berkeley: University of California, Press, 1982).

cultures,[21] where knowledge, belief, institutional practice, and even perception of time, space, and color are each viewed as relative to their respective cultures. Though such senses of plurality and relativity led to strident defenses by some anthropologists of cultural relativism, often as critique of their own culture's ethnocentrism,[22] more recent work by anthropologists questions the sufficiency of relativistic claims.[23] It is this legacy in anthropology, of accenting difference to the point of relativism while qualifying that relativism on the basis of their own fieldwork experience of others, that makes cultural anthropology's hermeneutic so valuable for aiding theology in its concern to understand contemporary experiences of cultural plurality.

From the wealth of writings by anthropologists reflecting on their intercultural encounters, one especially rich passage from anthropologist Paul Rabinow's *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco* stands out. These comments by Rabinow on his relationship to his informant, Ali, disclose the shifting terrain of intercultural liminality that I am proposing as reference for the Christ symbol.

> Under my systematic questioning, Ali was taking realms of his own world and interpreting them for an outsider. This meant that he, too, was spending more time in this liminal, self-conscious world between cultures. This is a difficult and trying experience—one could almost say it is "unnatural"—and not everyone will tolerate its ambiguities and strains.
>
> This was the beginning of the dialectic process of fieldwork. I say dialectic because neither the subject nor the object remain static. . . . With Ali there began to emerge a mutually constructed ground of experience and understanding, a realm of tenuous common sense which was constantly breaking down, being patched up, and re-examined, first here, then there.
>
> As time wears on, anthropologist and informant share a stock of experiences upon which they hope to rely with less self-reflection in the future. The common understanding they construct is fragile and thin, but it is upon this shaky ground that anthropological inquiry proceeds.[24]

Rabinow's description of his intercultural encounter as "liminal" may be seen as an application to his own experience of Victor Turner's notion of liminality in African ritual. For Turner, the liminal stage of African ritual is the ritual participant's transitional experience, being on the margin (between, say, childhood and adulthood). It is a time when the participant often gains sacredness and spiritual power. We need not

[21]On the culture concept in contemporary social and cultural anthropology, see George W. Stocking, Jr., *Race, Culture and Evolution* (New York: Free Press, 1968), pp. 195–233, and the older work, A.L. Kroeber and C. Kluckhohn, *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions.* Harvard University Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnography 47 (1952).
[22]See M. Herskovits, *Cultural Relativism* (1973).
[23]Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), pp. 38–52, and Wilhelm Dupre, "Ethnocentrism and the Challenge of Cultural Relativity," in Claude Geffre and Jesu-Pierre Jossu (eds.), *True and False Universality of Christianity* (New York: Seabury, 1980), pp. 3–13.
[24]Paul Rabinow, *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), p. 39.

presume that the liminal world of an anthropologist's intercultural encounter is necessarily also infused with such sacredness. But in light of the frequent relation of liminality and sacredness, it should not be surprising that liminality is proposed here as referent of the Christian tradition's Christ symbol.

Four elements of Rabinow's passage can be elaborated to clarify the notion of intercultural liminality. First, the "liminal self-conscious world between cultures," which Rabinow discusses, is characterized by questioning. This questioning is not simply the raising of just any question (though the haphazard, groping, and awkward queries are often also essential to fieldwork). It is a dialectical process of systematic questioning. As dialectical, questioning in this liminal world is aimed to reveal the valuable biases of the questioner and of the questioned. Dialectical questioning in fieldwork breaks the barriers of the questioner's world by highlighting the particularity of each party in the dialogue.[25] Through such questioning in fieldwork, as Gadamer writes about questioning in conversation generally, the real unity that makes intercultural understanding possible emerges from a play of question and answer that focuses differences.[26] To the final page of his book, Rabinow is aware of the crucial role of "otherness," and yet this otherness is not completely opaque; it is the very means to unity with those who are other.[27]

Second, the liminal world is a mutually constructed one. "Neither the subject nor the object remain static." In fact, it is no longer right to speak of subject comporting with an "object." More accurately, we see a mutually constructive activity that is a play of subjects, ultimately a play of subjects who are embedded, each in their own historical and cultural situations. Any knowledge of the other that the anthropologist is able to disclose is mutually constructed, by anthropologists and by the ones they describe.

Third, the liminal world is shared. As Rabinow puts it, through the questions and actions of both subjects seeking to accent differences, there is shared unity. There is for both a "stock of experiences upon which they hope to rely with less self-reflection in the future." Elsewhere, Rabinow writes that through the play of question and answer a "doubling of consciousness" occurs. Both anthropologist and Ali become conscious not only of their own cultural and linguistic worlds, but also of the liminal world that is born between them through encounter with each other's self-reflection.[28] In the active process of making crucial space between one another by highlighting their differences, they are caught up in shared webs of signification spun in their dialogical encounter.[29]

[25]Maria-Barbara Watson-Franke and Lawrence C. Watson, "Understanding in Anthropology: A Philosophical Reminder," *Current Anthropology* 16 (June 1975), p. 251.
[26]H.-G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York: Seabury, 1975), pp. 325–33.
[27]Rabinow, p. 162
[28]*Ibid.*, p. 119.

Lest we think this shared web is some "common ground," we must note, as my fourth point, how Rabinow qualifies the sense of unity with the other in the liminal world. It is a realm of only "tenuous common sense." The liminal world's common understanding is "fragile and thin." Rabinow stands, at best, on "shaky ground," which is always "breaking down, being patched up, and re-examined, first here, and then there." To make clear the qualification, Rabinow later explicitly denies as proper to this liminal consciousness any "privileged position" or "absolute perspective."[30]

As shifting, without privilege and absolute perspective, this shaky ground is understandably rough on those who enter upon it. It is "a difficult and trying experience—one could almost say it is 'unnatural'—and not everyone will tolerate its ambiguities and strains." Anthropologists' self-images are here thrown into doubt as they acknowledge themselves to be embedded in their own particular cultures and then give themselves to be reconstituted in the liminal encounter.[31]

The strains of intercultural liminality can at times lead anthropologists to interpret their quests for participant-observation of "the other" as a kind of self-loss, a sacrifice.[32] Indeed, the suffering endured by anthropologists simply to present accurate depictions of others' cultural lives is striking—ranging from the normal experience of "culture shock" to years of physical suffering.[33] Such demands are not just the by-products of anthropological adventure. They are intrinsic to anthropological knowledge of the other. They are part of the costs paid by those who seek a knowledge that can usually only be gained by entry onto the shifting terrain of a liminal world that interrupts both certainty and comfort. This liminal world of intercultural dialogue is what I am proposing as the referent of the Christ symbol when articulated in a culturally plural context.

It should also be noted that something like this liminal world is now often proposed as necessary for resolution of what philosophers and scientists traditionally take to be long-standing philosophical problems. For the sake of our science, our hermeneutics, and our praxis, the nurturing and fostering of dialogical community that has many of the traits we have elaborated from anthropological encounter is called for. We must learn to value "those experiences and struggles in which there are still the glimmerings of solidarity and the promise of dialogical

[29]*Ibid.*, p. 151.
[30]*Ibid.*
[31]*Ibid.*, p. 119.
[32]Claude Lévi-Strauss, "J.J. Rousseau: Founder of the Sciences of Man," *Structural Anthropology*, Vol. 2 (New York: Basic Books, 1976), pp. 35–36.
[33]See P. David Price, *Nambikwara Society* (The University of Chicago: Ph.D. dissertation, 1972).

communities in which there can be genuine mutual participation and where reciprocal wooing and persuasion can prevail."[34] It is not just fieldworkers in Morocco who are called to venture out onto the liminal terrain of dialogical community.[35]

III

Does the Christ symbol itself, as pervasive image for Christian faith and religion, as creatively confessed and predicated of Jesus in Scripture, creed, tradition, or as mediated by its own cultural-linguistic forms—does it in any way refer to such intercultural liminality? I think it does. Certain features of the Christ symbol, as mediated in its narratives and congruent communal praxis, do give it a liminal character that is especially appropriate for formulating christology in relation to cultural plurality.

Turn first to the narrative language of the New Testament where, for the Christian community, the identity of Jesus as the Christ is formulated. Analysis of both the form and meaning of these narratives suggests the liminality of Christ.

Ricoeur and others have stressed that the *form* of the gospel narratives, particularly in the parables, is "qualified" by a structural trait intrinsic to the narrated action. This trait, or "qualifier," is the narrative's tendency to highlight the extravagant, the paradoxical, the hyperbolic.[36] The gospel narratives intensify ordinary experience to the point of the extraordinary, not to distract from the ordinary but to illumine it from within. So, for example, the parable of the Good Samaritan is not only recommendation or illustration of a virtuous life-style. It is extravagant portrayal of "compassion without limit."

The narrative form, structurally charged with extravagance of this sort, has the particular function for readers of "dislocation." Even though the plot of the narrated story of Jesus may culminate in "re-orientation" for readers, our experience of this in the narrative is not without the jarring, disorienting encounter with an intensified vision of the ordinary. The narrative form "dislocates our project of making a whole of our lives." Even with later re-orientation, Ricoeur suggests that the dislocation is so radical that it occurs "without ever perhaps allowing us to remake a whole."[37]

This dislocating function is paralleled by the *subject matter* of the

[34] Bernstein, pp. 228–31. Bernstein sees this as an admonition emerging in the works of thinkers as diverse as Gadamer, H. Arendt, R. Rorty, and J. Habermas.

[35] This "liminal terrain" could be further delineated with the aid of David Tracy's notions of "limit-to experiences" and "limit-of realities" (Tracy, pp. 164–65). That is to say, intercultural liminality for anthropologists often includes reference to diverse "limit-to experiences" (loyalty to the whole, sense of oppression, beauty) and invocation of some whole or horizon within which the intercultural encounter is given some meaning. For this kind of analysis of intercultural liminality, see Mark Kline Taylor, "Lévi-Strauss: Evolving a Myth about Myths," *Religious Studies Review* 9 (April 1983), pp. 97–105.

[36] Ricoeur, "Biblical Hermeneutics," pp. 115–22.

[37] *Ibid.*, pp. 125–26.

gospel narrative. The whole narrative story of Jesus moves from an announcement that leads to challenge, and then scandalous condemnation and execution, before any vindication of Jesus in the resurrection. Further, the one vindicated always remains the one who was dislocated and who experienced to the death the discomforts of that dislocation. The whole story is laden with extravagance and hyperbole as Jesus, the individual on whom the narrative focuses with ever greater intensity,[38] carries love to extremity, to the point of his own death. This death, viewed as consequence of his radical existence for others, especially for the oppressed others, is startlingly the occasion for confession of his being from God, of his being the Christ. "In these narratives, that reign of God is now recognized as not coercive power but as the sovereignty of agapic, other-regarding love from God to all."[39] The meaning of the narrative itself, as carried by the plot, is also dislocating because readers are led to expect both full humanity and God in and through the kind of dislocation that is agapic transcendence for others.

Turn next to note the communal form of life that is suggested by the narrative, that embodies that narrative, and mediates it to us. Communal existence is implied by the very narratives themselves, suggesting as they do through form and meaning that dislocation is always toward life lived for and with others, and in that way, for and with God. The narrative impels to sociality not just as obligation subsequent to experience of God, but as the way humans are led to redemptive experience of God.

Among contemporary theologians, Edward Farley's social phenomenology of Christian redemptive existence is particularly helpful in relating the gospel narrative to its congruent communal life in a way that shows the meaning of Christian existence for intercultural liminality. Farley's major claim is that Christian faith occurs in a "faith world, a social matrix" that he terms ecclesia.[40] Ecclesia is the concrete cultural-linguistic form through which the reality of God is mediated.

Most pertinent to my concerns here is Farley's thesis that the distinctive trait of ecclesia's intersubjective life "derives from the strange way in which the human being who is not a participant in ecclesia is present to those who are participants."[41] Repeatedly, Farley stresses that Christian intersubjective experience is one wherein members co-intend "the stranger." Ecclesia is a concrete, "determinate" community, but one that is always hard to define because its character is to have an unformulatable boundary.[42]

In this sense, then, Christian communal existence, while always concrete and specific to some culture, nation, ethnos, and language, may be viewed as a "liminal" form of existence in those communities. By

[38] Frei, *The Identity of Jesus Christ*, pp. 135–38.

[39] Tracy, p. 278.

[40] Farley, p. 150.

[41] *Ibid.*, p. 158.

[42] *Ibid.*, pp. 171, 178.

co-intending strangers as its unifying bond, it is also always de-centering (or, to use the term in our discussion of narrative, it is a "dislocating" kind of existence). "Agape's radical character is disclosed only when it is coupled with the repudiation of all determinate social units as conditions of God's presence. . . . In agape the stranger is intentionally drawn into ecclesia."[43]

Agape's creation of a liminal communal life opens out directly into our problem of relating the Christ symbol to intercultural liminality. The Christ symbol, as mediated in both gospel narrative and communal form, means and so involves Christians in a dislocating co-intending of strangers. The experience of cultural plurality is not only a challenge in our current situation to which a christologist should be relevant. It is also intrinsic and appropriate to Christian existence as Christian. The features of intercultural liminality, which were described and valued by Rabinow, can now be understood as also intrinsic to Christian faith and practice. Christian liminal existence orients one toward affirmation of the other that is necessary (1) for dialectical questioning, (2) for processes of mutual construction in intercultural communication, (3) for a shared unity that accents differences, and (4) for living in the uncertainty and discomfort that often attend the disclaiming of any privileged, imposed common ground existing outside of dialogical encounter.

The liminal Christ calls forth concrete communities that glory in differences as the way to genuine unity in a culturally plural world. Whether we focus on the differences between Moroccan Ali and American Rabinow, between representatives of some other two cultures, between cultural forms in North American life that involve gender, class, nation, ethnic heritage, it is intrinsic to Christian liminal existence to accent those differences, to highlight one's own particularity and the other's, and only then to talk about unity. Christian liminal existence for the other will often flirt with the danger of co-opting the other's concrete world into its own. As Farley notes, this is to fall back from the often more discomforting challenge of ecclesial life: to adapt the Christian's concrete social and institutional forms "to the home-world of the stranger and not vice versa."[44] Viewed anthropologically, a call to this kind of adaptation is a call to "culture shock;" viewed theologically, it may be viewed as a call to what some third world theologians refer to as Christian "transposition" or "christological discomfort."[45]

A christology which invokes the liminal Christ and concretely accents and adapts to differences as the way to unity, though found in much of Hegel and others,[46] may be hardly understood by Western thought and

[43] *Ibid.*, p. 178.
[44] *Ibid.*, p. 50.
[45] Cf. Choan-Seng Song, *The Compassionate God* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1982), pp. 127–41, and Kosuke Koyama, *Waterbuffalo Theology: A Thailand Notebook* (Singapore: S.P.C.K., 1970), pp. 228–31.
[46] Cf. G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans A.V. Miller with analysis of the text and foreward by J.N. Findlay (Oxford: Clarendon, 1977), pp. 85–88.

culture. A truly liminal christology that seeks unity in differences may involve writing about the Christian experience of each other and of God in a way similar to the experiential claim of William Johnston, S.J.: "When people meet at the level of personal love achieved through radical non-attachment, they do not merge, nor are they absorbed in one another; . . . there is at once a total unity and a total alterity."[47] It would mean writing of Christ and God, and the meaning of these for our human life, with a radical sense of difference, otherness, and plurality as intrinsic to our experience of the sacred and of unity. Eberhard Jüngel is an example of one Christian theologian who moves in this direction, writing as he does of Christian existence as the "deprivation of security," though he does not articulate this existence in relation to cultural plurality.[48] In other theological contexts, the Christ symbol's reference to the liminal co-intending of others might then also become a point of inter-religious conversation, as other traditions of the sacred articulate their own approaches to difference and otherness.[49]

IV

In the experience of God and Christ in and through the other, in the embrace of difference and otherness, what preserves life on this liminal, shaky ground from indifference and repressive tolerance?

This question arises and must be broached as a part of a christological affirmation of plurality. For some, the resonance of Christian theology with pluralism is a questionable endeavor because, while addressing the quandaries of cultural plurality, it ignores human exploitation and oppression. Lee Cormie has suggested, for example, that there is a "hermeneutical privilege of the oppressed" that marks the limits of pluralism.[50] Similarly, Dorothee Soelle, while defending her own commitments to pluralism and tolerance, also calls for moves "beyond dialogue" and for the limitation of tolerance.[51]

In response to such questions, I would argue that Christians' liminal affirmation and co-intending of others as a form of pluralist commitment need not neglect the problems of oppression. The co-intending of strangers who are culturally other, who are outside a Christian's cultural-linguistic system, orients Chritian existence so that it is also a co-intending of those strangers who are "made other," who fall out of every cultural-linguistic system and are thereby systematically deprived of access to the flow of goods that makes human life possible. The way of the liminal Christ is a living for the culturally other *and* for the oppressed other.

[47] William Johnston, S.J., *Silent Music* (New York: Perennial Library, 1976), p. 147. Cited from Robert Magliola's *Derrida on the Mend* (West Lafayette, Ind.: Purdue University Press, 1984), p. x.
[48] Eberhard Jüngel, *God as the Mystery of the World*, trans. Darrell L. Guder (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), pp. 169–84.
[49] For examples of inter-religious dialogue between Christians and others about "differential mysticism," see Magliola, p. 225, n. 89.
[50] Lee Cormie, "The Hermeneutical Privilege of the Oppressed," *Catholic Theological Society of American Proceedings* 33 (1978), pp. 155–81.
[51] Dorothee Soelle, *The Strength of the Weak* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984), pp. 59–70.

A pluralist affirmation of the other as culturally specific addresses situations of human oppression by offering two important contributions. First, it provides a way of arguing for, and specifying the nature of, the "privilege of the oppressed." Second, it can help to guard the human specificity or real otherness of exploited groups, resisting tendencies to view them, stereotypically and simplistically, as "the oppressed."

Understanding both of these contributions requires an anticipatory word here on the difficult issue of what becomes of "truth" when, in a post-foundationalist, culturally plural world, dialogical communities (with their liminal dimensions) become important. What we are left with, and it is of no little significance, is a conversational approach to truth.[52] Truth becomes a hoped-for disclosure that occurs under the dialogical conditions in which many different voices and positions play. The possibility of truth's disclosure occurs with the presence of dialogue that is *inclusive* (giving a hearing to all with whom we have to do) and *genuine* (oriented to the other in all her, his, or their particularity). These two features, constituting the dialogical conditions for truth's disclosure, also make possible the pluralist's two contributions to reflection about human oppression.

Inclusiveness in dialogue is the feature that relates the pluralist's dialogical commitment most directly to an argument for a "hermeneutical privilege of the oppressed." Here we can indicate how life lived liminally for the other in dialogue moves the pluralist also toward that more complete form of liminal existence, where life is lived especially for the oppressed other. Recognizing a privilege for the voices of the oppressed is the manner in which dialogical communities intensify the dialogical condition of inclusiveness, and thus seek their surer truths. By including the oppressed—often rendered voiceless by death, persistent hunger, or by systematic distortion of social and political forms—dialogical communities extend the margins of their conversation. This intensification of inclusiveness is not just the patently human and humane thing to do (though, for many of us this seems self-evident); it is also the widening of the conversation so that truth may be experienced. Truth need not be uncritically viewed as the sole possession of the oppressed; but the latter do have hermeneutical privilege as the ones who are necessary for intensifying the dialogical conditions within which truth may be disclosed.

Richard Bernstein suggests how important this inclusive and diverse "width" is to reasoning in dialogical community. Citing C.S. Peirce, he writes that philosophy ought "to trust to the multitude and variety of its arguments rather than to the conclusiveness of any one. Its reasoning should not form a chain which is no stronger that its weakest link, but a cable whose fibers may be ever so slender, provided they are sufficiently

[52]On the relationship between conversation and truth, see Gadamer, pp. 330–31, 446–47, and Rorty, pp. 373–79.

numerous and intimately connected."[53] In linguistics, ethics, and philosophy, the intending of this inclusive play of voices, as constitutive of reasoning, has been explicitly formulated as the search for "wide reflective equilibrium" or "reductive warrants."[54]

By recognizing in the dialogue the voice of the voiceless, even and perhaps especially that of the annihilated,[55] a theologian's dialogical community seeks the widest equilibrium of its conversation, which is necessary for the truth of its reasoning. For pluralists dwelling liminally in dialogical community, recognizing the privilege of oppressed voices is no mere option. It is necessary to their experience of truth. And if an inclusive, dialogical approach to truth is ultimately all we have, then the privilege of the oppressed is essential indeed.

But the dialogical approach is not only inclusive. It must also be *genuine*. By way of this required feature of dialogue, we can clarify the second contribution made by the Christian pluralist's co-intending of others. Recall that to insist that dialogue be "genuine" is to insist that it intend others as other, in their own cultural-linguistic and personal particularities.[56] For the pluralist, it is never sufficient to speak only of "the oppressed." The oppressed must be allowed to be bodied forth in all their cultural-linguistic specificity. Recalling earlier discussion of the dialectic of accenting otherness as a way to union, this maximizing of specificity is not a way to keep others at a distance from us; to the contrary, it is the way to real union with them.

Let me briefly highlight four significant benefits of the pluralists' approach to genuine dialogical union by their accenting the particularity of the oppressed other.

First, the pluralist's dialogue respects the other "as other" in the sense of allowing the other to make a critique of any would-be conversation partners. If we among the pluralists are male, genuine dialogue moves beyond the merely polite and "gentlemanly" inclusion that gives a hearing to often voiceless women, but without really receiving the criticisms made by them. Or, if we among the pluralists are North American theologians, genuine dialogue means not just being well-read about the latest third world, liberation theologies, proclaiming our solidarity with the oppressed. Rather, it means hearing their critiques of

[53]Bernstein, p. 224.

[54]This search presupposes that reasoning attains its truth not on a foundation, but in contexts in which there interact a "diversity of judgments, principles and theories, each entailing different kinds of justification that come together to support or to criticize, to reinforce or to revise ('wide reflective equilibrium')." Similarly, arguments are warranted not because they are founded on axioms from which they are deduced or on cases from which they are inductively developed, but because they occur in and through a process of mutual development and critique ('retroductively warranted'). For further discussion and bibliography on these approaches, see Fiorenza, pp. 301–321.

[55]On the importance of a hermeneutical privilege for the remembered dead, see Helmut Peukert, *Science, Action and Fundamental Theology: Toward a Theology of Communicative Action* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1984), pp. 227–31, 243–45.

[56]For delineation of what I here term the "genuineness" of dialogue, see the discussion of "the highest type of hermeneutical experience," in Gadamer, pp. 324–25.

us, learning from them what they see theology needing to become. Dwelling on the liminal shaky ground of dialogical encounter can become a way toward the kind of genuine openness called for by Gadamer: "Openness to the other, then, includes the acknowledgment that I must accept some things that are against myself."[57]

Second, the pluralists' accenting of particularity can be a way to join with oppressed persons and groups in resisting their loss of distinctive subjecthood into the category, "the oppressed." If, as Metz has shown, the loss of subjecthood is essential to the experience of oppression,[58] and if part of this loss of subjecthood involves being submersed in stereotyping categories and generalizations that deny individual or group specificity, then the pluralist's focusing of oppressed peoples' cultural-linguistic specificities may meet an essential need of the oppressed.

Third, by accenting the specificity of oppressed peoples, one also focuses the "cultural dimension" of oppression. This cultural dimension may take the form of the destruction by some of another people's culture, as seems to have happened to the Ik of Africa and others.[59] Or, the cultural dimension may take the form of some peoples enculturating another people into a whole new culture that is a culture of oppression, a culture that is at best a "survival culture."[60] Whether oppression takes the form of destroying a people's culture or enculturating them into a no-exit, survival culture, the cultural dimension must be focused for an understanding of oppression.

Fourth, focusing the oppressed in their cultural-linguistic specificity seems essential also for understanding the intricate and systemic relationships between the cultures of the oppressed and those of the oppressor. The oppressed-oppressor relationship is often portrayed as so closely intertwined that a liberation of the oppressed would also be a liberation of the oppressors.[61] Why and how? We will rarely understand this hope if we do not unpack the nature of that relationship. Crucial for such a discernment is a culturally focused approach to the worlds in which different oppressed peoples dwell and by which they variously interact with oppressor cultures.

By raising these issues, we do indeed take up issues that demand significant further elaboration. Enough has been said here to suggest ways in which the Christian pluralist's affirmation of unity in difference does not necessarily lead to indifference concerning oppression, but in fact provides additional tools for reflection on and action in relation to it. All of the focusing of oppressed peoples' particularity, as well as the

[57]Gadamer, p. 324.

[58]Johann Baptist Metz, *Faith in History and Society*, trans. David Smith (New York: Seabury, 1980), pp. 60–70.

[59]Colin M. Turnbull, *The Mountain People* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972).

[60]See, for examples, James P. Spradley, *You Owe Yourself a Drunk: An Ethnography of the Urban Nomad* (Boston: Little, Brown Inc., 1970), and Carol B. Stack, *All Our Kin: Strategies for Survival in a Black Community* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970).

[61]Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1973), pp. 275–76.

granting of hermeneutical privilege to them in dialogical commmunity, presumes sustained dwelling by analysts on that liminal terrain that is in a particular cultural-linguistic domain, but continually co-intending the other. We have attempted to show the significance of that liminal terrain in a culturally plural world, and how the Christ symbol, mediated in narrative and ecclesial existence, expresses and creates the experience of living liminally with and for the culturally other.

CATHOLIC LITURGICAL REFORM

By German Martinez

Since liturgical reform, through a controlled process of historical restoration, has failed to revitalize the communal life of the church, a new creative liturgical movement, christologically founded, is imperative in order to bridge the gap between worship and people's experience of faith in our present culture.

TWENTY-TWO years have passed since the promulgation of the *Constitution on the Liturgy*.[1] That document was the first-fruit of Vatican II (1963–65), sealing half a century of liturgical movement and inaugurating a new order of worship in the Roman Catholic Church. The *Sacrosanctum Concilium* represented one of the most concrete pastoral efforts of the Council to safeguard the Roman tradition and to meet the challenges of the church entering a new age.

Now that twenty years have dissipated the anxieties and urgencies of change, we are in a better position to evaluate the outcome of this most controversial reform of modern Catholicism. If the goal of Vatican II was a new vigor of worship to meet the needs of modern times, as stated in the introduction to the Constitution, can we acknowledge today the actual interaction between liturgy and culture, worship and life, new order of worship and present social conditions? Did the reform simply restore the classical forms of the past, or did it also envision cultural adaptations within ritual creativity? In the end, the most important practical question is: Did the Vatican II reform actually make worship relevant to the lived religious experience of the whole person and the real community in celebrating the mystery of Christ?

A critical evaluation of the progress of this liturgical renewal to date would note among its achievements: first, that it revived a sense of community; second, it promoted active participation; third, the essential step of sharing the Word and the Bread became a reality; fourth, it enhanced communal singing; fifth, it developed a simple, essential, and

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[1] *Documents on the Liturgy, 1963–1979: Conciliar, Papal, and Curial Texts*, ed. by International Commission on English in the Liturgy (Collegeville, Minn: Liturgical Press, 1982). To these documents we should add those issued by the bishops and national conferences.

flexible structure; sixth, it opened the door to a new sacramental ministry and diversified lay ministries; and, finally, worship appeared clearly as the foundation and apex of Christian life.

Since Vatican II, liturgical life has regained transcendent universality in theory and practice, thus expanding the potentiality of worship from an ecumenical point of view. From a Roman Catholic perspective, the involvement of bishops and scholars around the world made the reform a reality of the whole church without precedent in the history of Christianity.

I

Problems encountered should not be allowed to discredit progress made. A critical evaluation of successes and failures must hinge on the two poles around which the process of liturgical reform developed, as stated in the Constitution: safeguard vital tradition and meet contemporary challenges.[2] To what extent did the results meet those two essential goals?

The church did revitalize its communal life in specific areas, as summarized above. It implemented a new order of worship through a process of historical restoration. But that was all: a restoration of the past, with a timid attempt of adaptation to the present.

In search for future creativity, remarks about some of the areas where the liturgical reform failed to live up to our expectations can be made. These remarks about failures, which cannot be taken in absolute terms, will attempt to preview the unfinished agenda for the future.

(1) *The Unfinished Agenda.* The outcome of the recent liturgical renewal is in many ways definitely positive, although this is not the general opinion of many sociologists. Their attempt to analyze the reaction of the people deals mostly with the fall-off in religious attendance of young adults, an acute problem that goes far beyond the complexities of worship. A deeper level of understanding in regard to the rejection of religious attitudes and ritual changes is needed. Surveys have been useful, but in these precise liturgical matters they are only partial and can be deceiving.

The present problematic situations are comparable in both American and many European churches. Recently, Father Andrew Greeley said: "The most directly pastoral effort of the Vatican was liturgical reform. Yet, as Father Patrick Collins recently acknowledged in a painfully honest interview in the *United States Catholic*,[3] most liturgies are 'lousy.' "[4] A real paradigm seems apparent from the sociological point of

[2] The last paragraph of the introduction to the Constitution summarized the goals proposed by the Council: "The Council also desires that, where necessary, the rites be carefully and thoroughly revised in the light of sound tradition, and that they be given new vigor to meet the circumstances and needs of modern times."

[3] Patrick Collins, "What Can We Do About Lousy Liturgy?" *U.S. Catholic* 46 (1981), p. 6.

[4] A. M. Greeley, "The Failures of Vatican II After Twenty Years," *America* 146 (1982), p. 88. See also "The Failures of Vatican II Revisited," *ibid.*, pp. 454ff.

view: "The liturgical changes were brought about and generally accepted by the elitist minorities," but "the popular masses have reacted negatively, either falling off more and more in liturgical attendance, or holding on to ancient ritual forms."[5] Although these opinions lean toward the pessimistic side, they cannot be overlooked.

In this reform, two main negative underlying factors must be seriously considered: first, the imbalance in the ritual presentations of the religious story, and second, the failure to clarify the complexities of religious symbolism.

(2) *The Irrelevant Spirituality.* An essential aspect, barely tackled so far, is the actualization of the liturgical language, and, above all, the doctrinal content. Current history is absent from the liturgy, composed—as it is—of mostly 1,500-year-old Roman prayers. This codified and anachronistic Roman language corresponds to an old social order and is irrelevant for where people work today.[6] A contemporary spirituality is missing, for instance, to voice the dramatic outcry for justice and peace in our day, to cite just one contemporary issue.[7]

The urgent need is for new creativity, not just timid adaptations, in several directions: integration of current theology, more biblical, ecumenical, and historical in its content; incorporation of the salvation history of the American people with an exegetical, mystical-body-of Christ metaphoric language to reflect the interconnection between symbolic rites and corporate history; correction of sexist language; new focus from a hierarchical and institutional language to a prophetic and communal one; broadening of the Christian vision in the liturgical language and content from a spirituality of individualistic perfectionism to a spirituality of social corporate responsibility in relation to creation, life, and human community. As Msgr. John Egan asked, "How can you revise the story of the liturgy to make it inclusive of the hopes and fears, sufferings and aspirations of today's world?"[8]

(3) *The Communication Gap.* The above-mentioned aspects of an historical language and anachronistic theological content are at the bottom-line of a communication gap. A further inadequacy originates from the misinterpretation of the concept of participation.

The *Constitution on the Liturgy,* and subsequent documents, exhausted all the adjectives that could express complete participation. In fact, "this full and active participation by all the people is the aim to

[5]I. A. Isambert, "Reforme et Analysis Sociologiques," *La Maison Dieu* 128 (1976), p. 78.

[6]Cf. an enthusiastic and profound view of the future of the liturgy based on its history and tradition by J. A. Chupungco, *Cultural Adaptation of the Liturgy* (New York: Paulist Press, 1982).

[7]A telling example is the failure to connect liturgy and social action as Msgr. John J. Egan contends in a recent article, "Liturgy and Justice: An Unfinished Agenda," *Origins* 13 (1983), pp. 245–253. Cf. also R. Avila. *Worship and Politics* (New York: Orbis, 1981); C. Duquoc and J. Guichard, *Politique et Vocabulaire Liturgique* (Paris: Cerf, 1975).

[8]*Op. cit.*, p. 252.

be considered before all else."[9] Consequently, the restructuring of the new rites called for the greatest possible interaction and dialogue of a community-celebrant. Was the idea of participating overdone?

Two different factors can bring about a wordy liturgy: (1) the imbalance between verbal, symbolic, and silent participation, and (2) over-use of conceptual and explanatory language.

Liturgies became overly verbose, and some of the non-verbal symbols disappeared without replacement. Father Patrick Collins expresses it this way: "I think people can be active participants listening and observing as well as speaking and moving around. . . . So, all during the Mass, it's one distraction after another."[10]

The theme of the day may be dense, and the doctrinal aspects diversified. Too much content cannot be compressed into too short a period of time, even though the liturgy of the Word takes two thirds of the celebration. Consequently, times of silence tend to disappear.

The second negative factor is the prevalent use of conceptual and dialectic language. The language that worship requires is metaphoric and symbolic, not only because liturgy is rooted in Scripture, but because of its own nature. "We put in the liturgical texts," Antoine Vergote writes, "too much theological disclosure. We thus mix up two functions: the cultural expression and the more intellectual reflection about the contents of faith."[11]

The participation envisaged here is of the total person engaged—in quality, not quantity—in the depths of an actual, vibrant, and transforming mystery of God. This mystery is revealed and present under the veil of symbols and images, whose meaning, including the formula of text, depends on their transparency, consistency, and presentation.

A balanced integration of good communication and eloquent silence gives the desired atmosphere of contemplation, allows the integration of communal and private prayers, and ultimately leads from the human surface to the depths of the mystery of God. The total need is not only circular (priest-community), but also vertical (community-divinity) participation and internalization.

(4) *The Eclipse of Sacredness and Wonder.* The loss of the sense of the "sacred" and "mystery" is the most universal criticism of the liturgy. It has been said that people do not complain about changes, even radical changes, but that their dissatisfaction stems overwhelmingly from the loss of a sense of mystery. The sacredness of worship in approaching the supernatural seems to constitute an essential dimension of the identity of people's own souls. That identity is lost when changes bring about banality. It is like taking away the living spring of their religious spirit.

In fact, the *sensus fidelium* is profoundly aware of worship as a

[9]*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, p. 14.

[10]*Op. cit.*, p. 10.

[11]Antoine Vergote. "Éclipse ou renouveau du sens du sacré dans l' actuelle liturgie," *La Maison Dieu*, 128 (1976), p. 112.

transcendent action of the actually salvific presence of the mystery of God. That action makes it possible to enter, beyond the limits of earthly and temporal existence, into the eternity of God. Do the newly adapted rites actually convey that sense of profound and reverent participation?

To draw a clear-cut line between the old and the new liturgy would be simplistic. The former used contemplative music (Gregorian), language presumed to be sacred (Latin), and a proliferation of gestures and signs (crosses, incense, bells, etc). The latter is characterized by popular, sometimes secular tunes, more familiar and conceptual language, and above all, poverty of signs. The "grandeur and sublimity," "spirit of reverence," "profound and dignified action" of the Latin Mass have been contrasted, although rather indiscriminately, with "the banality of the entire rite" and the "simplistic rather than profound" liturgy of the new Mass.[12]

Therefore, a profound presentation of the religious story in the ritual actions and the attitude of reverent awe and communion are imperatives demanded by the same nature and function of the Christian mystery, as long as it is not obscured with any glimpse of magical myth that alienates human life. In fact, "every liturgical celebration is a sacred action."[13]

(5) *The Shallowness of Functionalism.* The liturgical reform, intending to bring the liturgy closer to the people, simplified rituals without wanting to discard essentials. Any knowledgeable person agrees that the Mass of Paul VI, for instance, corresponds to authentic tradition in its formal structure better than the Tridentine form. Dissatisfaction does not come from change, but from a lack of quality and depth.

The attempt to bring the liturgy closer to the average person is, without doubt, a commendable one. But we have acted often in a simplistic and naive way. Signs and rites are not functional, but symbolic. "I think we're hitting the very core of what liturgy is," says Archbishop Weakland, "how through human signs and symbols one can create an awareness of transcendency. That does not negate the human element of the symbol but says that the symbol doesn't stop there—it goes beyond that."[14]

The social dimension referred to above interweaves with and complements this transcendent symbolism in the liturgy, leading to "an experience of the depth of existence"[15] and the discovery of that sacred dimension in our own depths. At the same time, our union with divinity depends on the capability of linking that sacred human dimension with the holiness of God. Worship, as a symbolic action, constitutes that link. So, meaningfulness and understanding are essential. Nevertheless, the

[12]Cf. J. Hitchcock, *The Recovery of the Sacred* (New York: Seabury Press, 1974).
[13]*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 7.
[14]R. C. Weakland. "You Can't Renew Liturgy Without Renewing People," *St. Anthony Messenger* (May, 1981), p. 16.
[15]Antoine Vergote, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

power of a symbol depends also on its grace, aesthetic value, and its quality to communicate effectively with the imagination.

Music, art, human sensitivity, a minimum of acting qualities in the celebrant as a leader are important, but never without the profoundness of dignity, reverence, and the atmosphere of contemplation. No doubt, our liturgy is impoverished as to its symbolism. This becomes apparent, for example, in the rite of marriage that has been reduced from the symbolism of a covenant to a simple contract. The liturgies of the Eastern Rites are a good example; they did not yield to the Western temptation of functionalism and efficiency.[16]

The official documents fully endorsed the same ideals regarding quality of participation. They refer continually to dignity, nobility, profoundness, and the solemnity dependent above all on the quality of participation.[17]

(6) *The Over-Massed Liturgy.* The importance of the Eucharist in the life of the community and its central role within the sacramental economy are beyond doubt. The New Testament and the classic Christian tradition would confirm this. The problem arises only when we narrow down and reduce all the worshipping and praying community gatherings to the Mass. It is the core, but not the total liturgy. Unfortunately, this tendency has predominated in these past two decades. Did we really overuse the Mass to epidemic proportions?

The Mass became the only resort for any kind of religious gathering, including social and even political events. This "pan-Massism" constitutes a liturgical imbalance that does not favor the quality, or even the centrality, of the Eucharist. There is no possible doubt regarding the intrinsic link between the Eucharist and the sacraments, but a frequent rite inclusion in the Mass of baptism, confirmation, and other sacraments does not allow the momentum and space due to specific rites that sanctify decisive events of human life. It is a question of pluriformity and balance versus reductionism and privatism.

There is not only a Mass for every occasion, but also several Masses for every day. This was not so in the early church, for only toward the end of the first millennium does the daily Mass become a universal practice.[18] At the same time, again from Apostolic times, another important liturgical institution continues: the Liturgy of the Hours. This communal non-Eucharistic form of worship, "the public and common prayer of God's people," has yet to be reclaimed.[19] It is not exclusive to clergy or religious, but belongs to every member of the community.

[16]Cf. G. Martinez. "Greco-Roman Cultural Symbols and Ritual Creativity Today: An Approach to Marriage," *Questions Liturgiques* 65 (1984), pp. 39–52.
[17]For instance, USCC (ed.), *Third Instruction on the Correct Implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* (Washington, 1970).
[18]Gregory I (590–604) provided the first firm reference to daily Mass in Rome. Cf. Daniel Callam, C.S.B., "The Frequency of Mass in the Latin Church ca. 400," *Theological Studies* 45 (1984), pp. 613–650.
[19]*General Instructions on the Liturgy of the Hours*, No. 1, in *Documents On the Liturgy*, p. 1086.

Some Protestant churches regained this tradition, like the international communities of Taize in France. The question to ask is whether "we are using, or should I say abusing, the prayer form of the Eucharist to fill needs that could be better met by other celebrations."[20]

(7) *The Under-Estimation of Liturgical Catechetics.* Although these twenty years could be defined as the attempt to bring the liturgy to the people, the needed simultaneous movement of the people to the liturgy has not fully occurred. The attempt changed the rites; but the old mentality persisted.

The way around the impasse is to be found in the precedence of the Fathers of the church. The goal of the preaching of the Fathers was to found a christocentric liturgical spirituality; as Ambrose puts it, "to encounter Christ in his mysteries."[21] Their preaching and catechetics were called *mystagogia,* which meant a profound initiation into the mysteries of salvation. Without this *mystagogia* from Scripture to human reality in the liturgy as an in-depth experience, there is no renewal. New forms of imagination may appear. Oftentimes, they are merely modern gadgets, because the key of the ritual signs is in the Bible, and they are accepted only through experimental faith. As Archbishop Weakland says, "You can't renew liturgy without renewing people."[22]

It goes without saying, therefore, that there is no effective liturgical catechetics without biblical support and background. Failure results when catechetics is stripped of its biblical substance. Scripture is the key not only because it provides fundamental inspiration, themes, and symbolism of the salvific actions in the New Testament, but also because the entire Bible structures the broad and rich context of the compexity of rituals and gestures, prayers and readings of any liturgy. William J. Bausch states that against the problem of reductionism, and ignorance of Scripture, too, "we have to regain the context of the sacraments," because "to have reduced an intricate piece of music to a simple one-finger tune is precisely what happened to the sacramental system."[23]

Integral to an effective *mystagogia* is lay involvement in liturgical preaching. This specific lay involvement is gaining momentum today. Extraordinary ministers to the Word are already a reality in many congregations in different countries. A variety of lay preachers helps forge a link between biblical background and modern society. The opportunity brings personal motivation and a variety of styles of

[20]R. L. Tuzik, "Ordinary Time," FDLC *Newsletter* 8 (1981), p. 32. For a theological approach to the problem, cf. E. Schillebeeckx, *op. cit.*, pp. 29ff.

[21]*Ap. Proph. David,* 12, 58. A prototype of liturgical catechesis is the Byzantine treatise written by a lay-person, Nicholas Cabasilas (ca. 1320–91). *A Commentary on the Divine Liturgy,* ed. J. M. Hussey and P. A. McNulty (London: SPCK, 1960).

[22]*Op. cit., p. 16.*

[23]W. J. Bausch, *A New Look at the Sacraments* (Notre Dame, Indiana: Fides/Claretian, 1977), pp. 6 and 7 respectively.

insightful preaching to the heterogeneous congregation of our society. The priests are limited in what experience they can bring to their homilies. Lay people can offer the realism and wealth of their lived world.[24]

The role of women in ministry especially constitutes an essential contribution of the lay ministry involvement in liturgy, from liturgical catechetics to a role of equality in all community celebrations. This movement is one of the greatest challenges in today's American churches, and the potential for a profound renewal in our society. In 1975, Paul VI declared that "in the 'advancement of women,' the church has already recognized a 'sign of the times' and has seen in it a call of the Spirit."[25] This call of the Spirit has yet to be heard, despite the fact that "many of the most healing and hope-filled rituals of our time are being created and led by women of deep faith and enduring hope."[26]

(8) *The Standardization of Worship.* The monolithic uniformity of the post-Tridentine Latin liturgy has been definitely broken in language and the use of rigid rubrics. Nevertheless, the cultural adaptation of these twenty years has been minimal and represents external implementation of the revision, thoroughly engineered and planned in Rome. The masterfully well done enterprise by the Consilium envisioned a turning back mostly to the classical forms of the Roman sacramentaries within a historical perspective. The Roman tradition, one among many, was indeed rediscovered. But that is as far as it has gone.

Will there be some day an American tradition of worship? The key to the overwhelming problem of decentralization of a bureaucratic machinery, which can no longer provide effective top-down solutions, is a new reciprocity model of the church. The symbiotic relationship between the worship action and a concrete church experience of faith in being and in transforming society is still denied in practice. The feeling of a liturgy out of tune with these times of grace stems from the practical denial of the "movement of the Spirit" and the "sign of the times" of the local church. Will there be in the future the possibility of a creative grassroots liturgical process, instead of the "in abstract" handouts from the top?

The church took the first step of restoration. Now, let the local churches take the second step and actually embody the traditions and the genius of individual peoples in the liturgy. It belongs to their future. This more profound ritual creativity has nothing to do with particular

[24]Cf. G. Zevini, "The Christian Initiation of Adults into the Neo-Catechumenal Community," *Concilium* 122 (1979), pp. 65–74. Also *Sacrosanctum Concilium,* 9 and *Evangelii Nuntiandi,* 14. They offer us the best example of liturgical preaching by lay people. It is surfacing more and more in many countries. See the case of "regular" lay preachers in West Germany, J. Frank Henderson, "The Minister of Liturgical Preaching," *Worship* 56 (1982), pp. 228–30.

[25]Paul VI, "Address on International Women's Year," *Origins* (May 1, 1975), p. 718.

[26]M. Fox in Brian Swimme, *Manifesto for a Global Civilization* (Sante Fe: Bear and Company, 1982), p. 41.

whims of adventurism of the moment. It is one of the most telling constants of the historical developments of Christian worship. Its inner nature demands it.[27]

"Even in the liturgy, the church has no wish to impose a rigid uniformity."[28] But stifling uniformity is still the reality. Ample possibilities for new ritual creativity are overlooked—even in those specific cases where the Constitution gave the opportunities. A typical example is the ritual of marriage. It has always been rooted in local customs, and the Constitution foresaw the possibility of an entirely local rite. Unfortunately, however, the Roman rite was uniformly adopted. The second-hand process of translation of a contractual rite missed the opportunity of recuperating the biblical paradigm of the covenant in the celebration of marriage. Comparison of this instance with the Eastern rites will point out the dull and symbolically poor expressions of the Western liturgical reform.[29]

One striking fact is that the Eucharist, for example, is celebrated in exactly the same way in Nairobia, in Manila, and in New York. But these three capitals represent three thoroughly different cultural worlds.[30]

Besides this global standardization within world-wide Catholicism, another type of standardization affects directly the local faith community. It results in routine uniformity and ritualistic stereotypes within the liturgy of a parish. If Masses are all the same mold and shape, for instance, the worship service cannot meet the needs of a heterogeneous community: ethnic groups, most notably Hispanics, young people, divorced, unchurched Catholics, and so on.

II

A retrospective look at these past two decades leads to an indisputable assessment: a new order of worship *is* in place. This new order is, however, the simple result of a historical revision. A controlled process of archeological restoration of rites, translation of European and Roman cultural expressions, and limited local adaptations have been accomplished.

A new liturgical movement is imperative in order to bridge the cultural and religious gap. This contradicts the assumption that liturgical growth has reached a standstill. If the church is a historical

[27]Cf. the excellent study of A. J. Chupungco, "A Historical Survey of Liturgical Adaptation," *Notitiae* (January, 1981), pp. 28–41. "It has been justly said that the Romans possessed the receptive but not the creative imagination," according to E. Bishop, "The Genius of the Roman Rite," *Liturgica Historica* (Oxford, 1918), p. 12.

[28]*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 37.

[29]*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 77–79. The *Praenotanda* to the Roman Ritual of Marriage emphasize the same need, but the American ritual is just a translation of the Latin ritual.

[30]Cf. R. Kaczynski, "Der *Ordo Missae* in Der Teilkirchen des römischen Ritus," *Liturgisches Jahrbuch* 25 (1975), pp. 134–135, and Anselme-Titianna Sanon, "L'Africanization de la liturgie," *La Maison Dieu* 123 (1971), pp. 108–125.

concretization of the mystery of Christ, and its worship a core dimension of sacramental life, liturgy will be maintained alive in an ever on-going process of renewal. In other words, if the Eucharist is the source and summit of the whole Christian life, this communal prayer action cannot be anything but inclusive of all the hopes and sufferings, joys and struggles of the actual local and global community. This leads to a decisive future agenda: the strong development of the religious and pastoral dimensions of the liturgy.

Ironically, the immediate past experience within our secular society has been a strong reaffirmation of that very religious dimension, despite the assumptions against it. The theories of secularization of the sixties have been and should be dismissed as fantasies. In the existential struggle, the secular person will still search for sacred transcendence through symbolic expressions. Here we need to acknowledge the importance of the liturgy in a technological age.[31]

Andrew Greeley pointed out recently that religion was simply the major failure of Vatican II.[32] He insisted that there was a disintegration of both the symbolic paradigm and the old religious story system without providing a substitute for them. Consequently, the paramount future task will be the construction of religious story systems which are concerned for present needs and experiences. Attention to religious phenomena and experience of the present will ensure a living liturgy of the grassroots. Spiritual imagination can create a new stage of development for an American order of worship.

The future task will be, indeed, an interdisciplinary effort. Two different sources must interact, the hierarchical-collegial source and the grassroots source of the local church. This collaboration will create a sound tension between the normative structure and grassroots religious experience, resulting in creative interaction between the local and the universal church.

Solutions without the cultural religious creativity of the faithful produce abstract and frigid liturgies. It is in a concrete community that the experience of the *kairos* actualizes a privileged salvific movement, incorporated into the essential structure without stifling the genuineness of its message and the novelty of its symbolism. Here only can the cultural gap disappear into human visual arts, literary composition, movement and action, symbol and story, aesthetic sensitivity, and warmth of feeling for an "incarnational" liturgy.[33]

Current trends in the area of pastoral music, for example, exemplify the movement from restoration to creativity. Pre-conciliar models which stressed passive congregational participation cannot directly be transplanted into a post-conciliar liturgy which has as its aim full participa-

[31]Cf. Harvey Cox, *Unsecular Man: The Persistence of Religion* (New York, 1972).

[32]*Op. cit.*, p. 86.

[33]Cf. P. W. Collins, *More than Meets the Eye: Ritual and Parish Liturgy* (New York: Paulist Press, 1983).

tion. The past twenty years have been a remarkable period in the development of pastoral music. Composers have had to create new musical forms of expression to serve the needs of a developing liturgy and a pilgrim church. This pastoral music renaissance has not been without its growing pains, and debate continues concerning the quality of contemporary liturgical music.[34] Yet current trends represent the best example of innovative reform which must hinge on two perennial dimensions of worship: on the one hand, the scriptural, christological, communal, and solemn celebration of salvific action, and, on the other hand, the embodiment in that celebration of the warmth and profundity of human experience.

"I find the great thing in this world is not so much where we stand as in what direction we are moving," wrote Samuel Eliot Morison, in his preface to his *Oxford History of the American People*.[35] Communal Christian prayer and worship can no longer subsist in lofty cultural isolation. The movement of the spirit makes a new liturgical movement imperative. Here in America, new emerging ministries from within the community could represent a new frontier for the future of worship. Here also, after more than twenty years of restoration, the diversified celebrating communities will want to create their own lived experience and feel "at home." This will only come about with a new era of renewal "from within." Here spiritual imagination will flow spontaneously from the biblical-liturgical spirit of a strong community of faith.

[34]Cf. T. Day, "When the Congregation Prays Twice," *Commonweal* 112 (1985), pp. 143–146. See also, "Dissonance Over Church Music (readers reply)," *ibid.*, pp. 272–276.

[35]The quotation is taken from Oliver Wendell Holmes; quoted in J. Z. Smitz, "The Influence of Symbols Upon Social Change: A Place On Which To Stand," in J. Shaughnessy, *et al., The Roots of Ritual*, p. 137.

PROTESTANT WORSHIP TODAY

By Fred R. Anderson

"It is not unusual to find cities where Protestant churches of varying demoninations as well as Roman Catholic churches are using the same lessons in worship. As these Christians interact and converse in their day-to-day lives, they are discovering a unity in their worship that transcends historic boundaries and divisions, a unity of commitment to the centrality of Jesus Christ as witnessed to in Scripture. . . . Those responsible for liturgical renewal are asking two questions: 'Is it Christian?' and 'Is it equipping the saints for their ministry?' These are the questions by which worship reforms should be evaluated."

WHAT is happening in Protestant worship these days? Asked this way, the question is unmanageable. What is a Protestant when it comes to worship? Liturgically, traditions within Protestantism can be grouped into three broad categories based upon their relationship to the use of a service book. Liturgical historian James F. White has classified this as the *liturgical right*, those whose liturgy is prescribed by the service book—Episcopal and Lutheran churches; the *liturgical center*, those for whom a service book is optional, but who rely heavily upon one for sacraments and rites—Reformed, Presbyterian, United Methodists, United Church of Canada, and portions of the free-church tradition such as the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); and *the liturgical left*, those who reject service books as a violation of their freedom of worship according to the Word of God—Quakers, Pentecostals, and especially the free church tradition of the Anabaptists.[1] The focus on this discussion will be upon the *liturgical center*.[2]

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[1]James F. White, "A Protestant Worship Manifesto," *The Christian Century* (Jan. 27, 1982), p. 82.

[2]I do not mean that liturgical renewal is not high on the agenda for the Episcopal and Lutheran churches in America. It is, and great strides have been taken in those churches as witnessed to by the revised *Book of Common Prayer* (1982), the forthcoming ecumenical hymnal from the Episcopal Church, and the *Lutheran Book of Worship* (1978). These

I

It has been common to trace the resurgence of Protestant interest in worship to the advent of Vatican II and its publication of the *Constitution of the Liturgy*.[3] In fact, this movement in Protestant churches began much earlier than 1963, and can be traced back to the nineteenth century. Liturgical theologians, Roman Catholic and Protestant alike, have been at work since the early part of this century, preparing the ground for liturgical renewal. For Rome, Vatican II represents a major harvest of that previous work. For Protestants, the Council represented two things. First, its liturgical work has been seen as a fulfillment of the agenda set before the church in the sixteenth century (in many ways far more faithfully than within the Protestant house). Second, it has created a new climate of oneness in Christ from both sides of the Christian household. This has enabled Protestant and Roman Catholic liturgical scholars to enter openly into dialogue and cooperation in the discipline of liturgical theology. This has resulted in a most important development in Protestant worship, *a movement toward catholicity, and a recovery of the traditions lying behind the sixteenth century*. Roman Catholic, Episcopal, Reformed, Lutheran, Wesleyan, and theologians of other traditions are in conversation and dialogue, as new liturgies and resources are developed for use within particular denominations.[4]

The movement toward catholicity among scholars has been matched by a parallel development in local Protestant congregations. The local Protestant church of today, regardless of its denominational affiliation, is truly ecumenical, and comprised of members from the broad spectrum of Christian traditions. This plurality denies sole allegiance to a worship tradition as *the tradition*. Rather, worship is judged by its ability to allow people to offer God praise, and to nurture and equip them for ministry. Plurality in the pew forces a church to ask of its worship not "Does this conform to our tradition?" but "Is this Christian?" ***The single most important factor in Protestant worship today is that it is in dialogue with more than its own tradition, seeking to respond to the heritage of Christian worship in a way which will equip the saints for ministry.***

works have inspired and provided guidance for worship leadership in churches of the liturgical center. Those responsible for these important resources still represent the largest group of Protestant scholars and liturgical theologians in the professional society known as the North American Academy of Liturgy.

[3]*Documents on the Liturgy, 1963–1979: Conciliar, Papal, and Curial Texts*. Ed. by International Commission on English in the Liturgy (Collegeville, Minn: Liturgical Press, 1982).

[4]This cooperation is most apparent nationally at the North American Academy of Liturgy, and internationally at *Societas Liturgica*. Though membership in these groups is still predominantly Roman Catholic, the commitment of study is to the liturgy of the church catholic. Many of the people providing leadership in Protestant liturgical renewal are members of these organizations.

II

The *second* greatest factor having an impact upon Protestant worship is the move to restore Scripture to a central place in worship. A curious thing has occurred in Protestant worship. In a tradition whose watchword was *Sola Scriptura*, Scripture was being read only to reinforce what the preacher had to say, thereby becoming more optional than central in worship. The popularity of topical preaching, the pressure of the civil and denominational program calendar, and the desire to be a polished and entertaining speaker caused preachers to be more and more sparse with the portions of Scripture used in worship. Scripture texts often became a springboard for diving into the preacher's subject, rather than one of the instruments through which God addresses a worshiping community. As a result, less and less Scripture was being read.

The average Protestant congregation has been fortunate to have a responsive reading (usually a highly edited selection from the back of a hymnal, generally a Psalm) and one Scripture lesson, the text for the sermon. The appearance of *The Common Lectionary* has had a significant impact on this situation. The rapid adoption of this three-year cycle of biblical lessons for use in Sunday worship is nothing short of astounding.

Shortly after publication of the Roman lectionary, *Ordo Lectionum Missae* (1969 and 1980), a modification of the schedule of Sunday Scripture readings was incorporated into the table of readings in *The Worshipbook*, the service book published by three Presbyterian churches in 1970.[5] Lutheran, Episcopal, United Methodist, Disciples, and United Church of Christ denominations in the United States and their related bodies in Canada followed with similar actions within the next decade. In 1978, the Consultation on Common Texts[6] met to assess the usefulness of the Roman lectionary in these Protestant traditions, and to determine what should be done to harmonize and revise it for broader use in the church. The Consultation agreed to work for as much consensus as possible concerning the lessons in the three-year lectionary. It also agreed to work to develop a commonly accepted calendar, a schedule of psalmody, and a common glossary of worship terminology. A working-body was then appointed to produce a revised lectionary which would correct some imbalances in the way the earlier lectionary had used the Old Testament, as well as work toward these other concerns. The product of that committee appeared in 1984 under the title

[5]The Joint Committee on Worship for Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Presbyterian Church in the United States, The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. *The Worshipbook* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1972).

[6]The Consultation on Common Texts originated in the mid-1960s with the goal of providing commonly accepted English texts for the Lord's Prayer, the creeds, canticles, and invariable prayers of the Roman Mass.

Common Lectionary: The Lectionary Proposed by the Consultation on Common Texts.[7]

The impact of this lectionary cannot be overstated. In denominations of the liturgical center, pastors have been free to use the lectionary, or have been constrained to be more thoughtful about the way in which they use Scripture in worship and how they approach their selection of texts for reading and preaching. The use of the lectionary as a way to organize the Sunday service has restored Scripture to a central place in Protestant worship.

Today, with a common table of readings in a commonly agreed upon calendar for the Christian year, it is not unusual to find cities where Protestant churches of varying denominations as well as Roman Catholic churches are using the same lessons in worship. As these Christians interact and converse in their day-to-day lives, they are discovering a unity in their worship that transcends historic boundaries and divisions, a unity of commitment to the centrality of Jesus Christ as witnessed to in Scripture.

The lectionary has also affected preaching. Fifteen years ago, students were asking professors of homiletics: "Why bother to preach? Why not just celebrate?" What lay behind this query was an undefined criticism of the preaching that students had been hearing and of the sterility that emerges in worship when everything is word-oriented and instrumental to preaching the sermon. Today, pastors are gathering in communities across denominational lines to study lections for the coming week. Sermon preparation is emerging out of exegetical groups. Theological traditions are encountering one another in the study of the Scripture motivated out of pastoral concern and a need to proclaim the Word in a larger worship setting.

Publishers have not missed the commercial opportunity, and the market has been well supplied with homiletical and liturgical resources. At first, there was a flood of "canned" sermons, but as time has passed, these have proved unacceptable, and, for the most part, have left the scene. Publishing houses are now offering a body of secondary literature in the form of commentaries and liturgical resources.[8] These are being written by leaders in biblical and liturgical scholarship to help pastors in their task of preaching biblically in the worshiping community. As ministers work with these tools, weaving them into the counterpoint of

[7]Consultation on Common Texts, *Common Lectionary: The Lectionary Proposed by the Consultation on Common Texts* (New York: Church Hymnal Corporation, 1984). This should not be confused with the earlier publication by the National Council of Churches of Christ document entitled *An Inclusive Language Lectionary*, which was an attempt to translate texts from the common lectionary, avoiding masculine predominate language.

[8]Fortress Press led the way with *Proclamation* which is now in a third edition. The Liturgical Conference's "Homily Service: An Ecumenical Resource for Sharing the Word" is exceptional in its exegetical and homiletic approach to texts. Abingdon's *Preaching the New Common Lectionary* is another example of first class material now being published to assist pastors.

parish life, the result is a new generation of preaching that is exegetical rather than topical, sacramental rather than theatrical. Sermons, of course, will always differ according to the gifts, competence, and discipline of the individual preacher. But in a remarkable way, the whole enterprise of preaching in Protestantism today is far more healthy, vital, and biblically responsible than twenty or thirty years ago.

III

A *third* major development in Protestant worship is the recovery of the Christian year. Historically, the church has observed time either through a weekly cycle oriented around the idea of Sabbath, or a yearly cycle which gradually developed as the church reworked the Jewish festival cycles, integrating them with the festivals of the incarnation and the resurrection. The Reformers of the sixteenth century trimmed the florid calendar of the Middle Ages to five evangelical feast days: Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension, and Pentecost, shunning the observance of liturgical seasons. Varying influences of "High Church," Puritanism, anti-Romanism, and Sabbatarianism all worked their influence on how Protestants observed time, so that by the mid-point of this century the Christian year had virtually disappeared, leaving only the civil calendar and denominational program concerns to shape the content of Sunday morning. The baleful effect of this upon preaching has already been cited. Needless to say, this dynamic also had an effect upon other elements of Protestant worship, shaping the rhythm of sacramental celebration and the content of anthems, hymns, prayers, and leadership in worship. *The Common Lectionary* has helped recover the Christian year as an annual cycle in which the weekly cycle of Lord's day commemoration occurs, creating a celebration of Christ in time: from incarnation (Advent-Christmas-Epiphany) through passion, death, and resurrection (Lent-Easter), and Christ's continuing presence in the church (Pentecost) until he comes again (Advent). Yet, this annual cycle remains subservient to the primacy of the Lord's Day as the time for the proclamation of the Gospel in word and sacrament. The calendar has helped Protestant churches order their worship-life after the pattern of Jesus Christ's life and ministry, rather than by civil time, ecumenical observance, or church program concerns, though each may still be appropriately recognized within the cycle.

IV

The *fourth* important event in Protestant liturgical renewal is the recovery of sacraments as integral to worship on the Lord's Day. Though the churches of the liturgical center have professed a theology in which sacraments are "means of grace" and occasions for encounter with God in moments of divine self-giving, in fact, a word-oriented theology has dominated Protestant worship. As this century has experienced the limitation of words, the demise of linguistic philosophy, and moves into

what philosophers are now calling the "post-modern world,"[9] people in congregations have expressed a hunger for experience of God's presence beyond what they receive through words. At the same time, the church is coming to the end of a period when baptism has been administered almost as any citizen's right in a so-called Christian society. There is an awareness that the church is living in a post-Christian world where its stewardship of the sacrament of baptism has been poor. It is not accidental that the question of who should receive the Lord's Supper has continued to occupy the attention of denominational committees, pastors, and church members. This simply reflects a real confusion on the part of church members, pastors, and some theologians concerning baptism. The influx of the baptismal theology of the liturgical left has made an impact upon the situation, leaving many with two theologies of baptism.[10] The rationalism of the twentieth century concerning symbol and the notion of egalitarianism in American culture have domesticated the Lord's Supper into a devotional memory exercise that any who may feel so moved may enjoy, regardless of their baptismal status or willingness to assume baptismal responsibility.

In response to this, denominations have been studying both baptism and the Lord's Supper, as well as preparing appropriate liturgical materials which conform to theological understandings of the sacraments. As this has occurred, two major things are emerging. First, both baptism and the Lord's Supper are being taken more seriously as integral to being a member of the body of Christ. Baptism is baptism, regardless of when it is administered, and it is the sacrament of inclusion in the body of Christ. It is more than an act of dedication, requiring discipline in administration and reception. Second, the once-for-all nature of baptism requires the nurture and sustenance of regular and frequent participation in the Lord's Supper. This is being recognized not only by official statements from denominations, but more importantly, by people in the pew. This can be illustrated by what has occurred in the Presbyterian family. Although the Directory for Worship said it was appropriate to observe the Lord's Supper as often as each Lord's Day, in fact, the average Presbyterian congregation in 1961 was doing so only four times a year. Since that time, a major change has occurred, with monthly celebration quckly becoming the norm. At the same time, there is now a serious movement toward weekly celebration.[11] Some are suggesting that by the turn of the century, a major portion of Presbyterian congregations will be observing word and sacrament as outlined in *The Worshipbook* each Lord's Day. A parallel movement to weekly celebration of the Lord's Supper is taking place within the Methodist Church, the Lutheran family, and the United Church of Canada.

[9]Diogenes Allen, "The Restoration of Sacramentality in a Post-Modern World," *Reformed Liturgy and Music* (Louisville: Office of Worship, Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.), Vol. XIX, no. 2 (Spring, 1985), pp. 85–89.

[10]Cf. "Directory for Worship," *The Book of Order* (The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1982), Chap. V, especially section 20.02.

[11]Harold M. Daniels, "Weekly Eucharist Among Presbyterians," *Reformed Liturgy and Music* (Louisville: Office of Worship, Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., Vol. XIX, no. 1 (Winter, 1985), pp. 18–23.

V

A *fifth* area of renewal is in music. Protestants are rediscovering the Psalter as a book for singing. The lectionary's inclusion of a table of psalms to be used in conjunction with the three lessions for the day has brought a resurgence of interest in psalmody. Here the historic role of psalms as the people's sung praise is being reintroduced to the whole church. Roman Catholics have produced large portions of new material as they have rushed to help their people learn to sing in the liturgy. The quality is often mixed, but much of the new material is good. Lutherans have led the way for Protestants in their *Lutheran Book of Worship*. New forms of singing psalms are emerging. Whereas the choice once was between Gregorian chant, Anglican chant, and metrical psalmody, musical forms are emerging in which a choir or soloist can sing the psalm text, while the congregation responds with a sung *antiphon* based upon a phrase within the text itself, or another passage of Scripture. Fr. Joseph Gelineau is well known for his composition of *The Grail Gelineau Psalter*[12] which contains all one-hundred-fifty Psalms and eighteen scriptural songs (canticles). Protestant liturgical musicians are adapting that style and developing psalms which can be sung in multiple worship settings from family worship to the Service for the Lord's Day. Metrical psalmody remains important, and work is being done to recover this rich Protestant heritage, as task forces work responsibly to alter older texts to make them inclusive and contemporary. New metrical texts are being written to be sung to well known hymn tunes. Sung praise is returning as the ministry of all the people, not just for a choir loft or a chosen few.

This is leading to a larger reconsideration of the place and use of music in Christian worship. The classification *sacred music* has never really been appropriate to the church. Historically, it is a musical form which developed in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries for the theatre. Its thrust is theatrical rather than doxological, and for edification or entertainment rather than prayer or proclamation. As such, it often works against the purposes of Christian worship, and seems out of place on Sunday morning. However, as most musicians in Protestant churches have been trained to be either performers or educators, training others for performance, these musical forms have been drawn into the sanctuary. The positive side of this is that within denominations many professional organizations for church musicians

[12]Joseph Gelineau, *The Grail/Gelineau Psalter*, J. Robert Carroll, ed. (Chicago: G.I.A. Publications, Inc., 1972).

are emerging to train and set standards for church music.[13] Increasingly, Protestants are using music in worship to draw people together in corporate praise in psalms or hymns, as another vehicle for the interpretation and proclamation of Scripture, and as another form of corporate prayer.

VI

The sixth major development affecting the worship of Protestant churches is the impact of the leadership of women in the church serving as ordained ministers, liturgists, and lay-readers. Twenty years ago it was relatively rare to find a congregation where women provided leadership in worship on a weekly basis, much less where they were visible preaching, celebrating the sacraments, and officiating in other acts of liturgical ministry. Today, especially in multiple staff ministries, it is unusual not to find women taking such a leadership role. Not only has this further strengthened the historic principle of the priesthood of all believers through dramatic and vivid illustration, it has also sensitized the church to the language it uses to talk about God and to address and speak about the human community.

The debate about language has been in progress now for about fifteen years. The conservative side of the house tends to see this as a tempest in a liturgical teapot, insisting that "man" is inclusive of both male and female. On the other hand Paul Shilling speaks for many of us when he writes:

> Often when we say that language isn't important we mean that the language in question is not hurting *us*. In such cases, we need to develop enough sensitivity to the feelings of others to imagine ourselves in their place. If we do this, we discover that many worshipers are offended by [gender] exclusive language. Concern for all members of the body of Christ will prompt action to remove such impediments to true community and reality in worship . . . Christians who may not feel personally threatened by masculine language can hardly be content to have devoted members of the Christian community estranged in the very act of corporate worship that should bind them together.[14]

The longer liturgists struggle with this the more they discover that the critical question is not "is the text void of masculine pronouns or dominant imagery," but rather, "does the language of the text include not only both sexes, but also all races, social classes, and age groupings?"

The more difficult area of discussion over language has to do with the language used to talk about God. Here, fierce debate is in progress

[13]One outstanding example of such an organization is PAM, The Presbyterian Association of Musicians, which sponsors annual worship and music conferences as well as continuing consultation with musicians and liturgical theologians. Its journal *Reformed Liturgy and Music*, continues to make a major contribution to the continuing education of musicians and pastors alike.

[14]S. Paul Schilling, *The Faith We Sing* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1983), p. 21.

between ideologues from both sides of the aisle. Initial attempts to avoid the use of "Father" by addressing the first person of the God-head as "Creator" reveal severe deficiencies in trinitarian theology. Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer is not what the church means by One God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Attempts to avoid personal pronouns when referring to God in preaching and other liturgical texts forces one to talk about God in the passive—a notion no one wants to affirm. Marianne Micks is surely correct when she writes, "We need to insist that only personal pronouns are adequate. God is never an it."[15] She issues a call, not to exclude masculine references to God, but to begin to recover and employ the rich heritage of feminine references which have been overlooked in scripture.[16] The debate is far from over, and nothing but tentative answers are available. However, between the extremes, a consensus is emerging which says that the church must strive to discover language about God which is as intentionally diverse and varied as the biblical witness and the church's theological traditions. As evangelism continues to be pressed as an agenda, the church finds itself searching for language which may be used in such a way that each member of the human community will feel included and equally cherished before God. The results of this conviction will be felt in the new materials being developed for worship. The impact on hymns, prayers, creeds, baptismal formulas, benedictions, preaching, and even Bible translations promises to be a major source of controversy well into the last decade of this century.

VII

The *seventh* major development within Protestant worship is the publication of new service books, hymnals, and other worship materials. The Episcopal Church led the way with its revision of *The Book of Common Prayer*. Its new ecumenical hymnal is in the final stages of editorial work prior to publication. Lutherans quickly added strength to the movement in 1978, with the publication of a new service book hymnal, known as the *Lutheran Book of Worship*. Presbyterians and Methodists in the United States, and the churches which formed the United Church of Canada, had been at work on developing new materials, but the agenda of denominational merger and reorganization occurred in the midst of this work, creating an opportunity for introducing much needed new material. Denominational mergers, unions, and reunions opened the door for liturgical renewal. New churches need new resources which more adequately reflect the inclusive nature of the new body. Such an occasion has been an opportunity for the work of liturgical scholarship to be felt at official denominational levels and

[15]Marianne M. Micks, *The Joy of Worship* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1982), pp. 21, 39–45; see also John M. Mulder, "A Non-Sexist Style Guide," *Theology Today*, 34 (1978), pp. 444–47.

[16]Micks, *op. cit.*, pp. 40ff.

work its way out into congregations. Two such mergers in the United States illustrate how this has occurred.

In 1968, the merger forming the United Methodist Church opened the door for a major liturgical renewal in that church. The 1970 General Conference of the United Methodist Church authorized its Commission on Worship to begin work on supplemental worship resources which "would provide alternatives that more fully reflect developments in the contemporary ecumenical church."[17] This led the 1972 and 1976 General Conferences to authorize the Board of Discipleship "to develop standards and resources for the conduct of public worship in the churches."[18] The series of publications known as *Supplemental Worship Resources* began to appear. In 1972, an alternate text for the Lord's supper emerged, followed by liturgical texts for baptism and confirmation, a new basic pattern of Sunday service, a new rite for marriage and the funeral, as well as resources for the Christian year. In 1980, these services were revised and published in one collection entitled *We Gather Together*.[19] Shortly thereafter, *At the Lord's Table*[20] appeared in print. A part of the SWR series, it was the natural extension of the United Methodist Church's commitment to the basic pattern of Sunday worship of word and table, and it provides texts for twenty-two eucharistic prayers to be used as seasonal or pastoral circumstances require. In 1981, *Songs of Zion*[21] was released as a songbook which would make available to churches music from black religious traditions.

In 1958, a merger formed the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, giving birth to a New Directory for Worship which was adopted in 1961. Initiated out of a felt need for a new *Book of Common Worship*[22] the directory led to a new service book, *The Worshipbook,*[23] published in 1970 (hymnal edition, 1972). A joint venture of three Presbyterian churches, this was a conscious effort to develop a service book which would be faithful to Presbyterian traditions, obey constitutional mandates, and be ecumenical in its scope. The hymnal has experienced limited success, but the service book was widely accepted, making major changes in the way Presbyterians worship. Because of time-bound prose which soon wore thin, pastors found themselves drawn to the *order* of *The Worshipbook* while searching other places for a richer vocabulary of prayer. This set the stage for a

[17] *At the Lord's Table, Supplemental Worship Resources 9* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1981), p. 4.
[18] *1976 Book of Discipline,* The United Methodist Church, Par. 1316.2.
[19] *We Gather Together, Supplemental Worship Resource 10* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980).
[20] *Op. cit.*
[21] *Songs of Zion, Supplemental Worship Resources 12* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1981).
[22] See the Report of the Committee on Common Worship to the 172nd General Assembly, *Minutes of the 172nd General Assembly* (Philadelphia: Office of the General Assembly, 1960), pp. 141–164.
[23] *Op. cit.*

major liturgical renewal effort for Presbyterians, the *Supplemental Liturgical Resources* series.

The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and the Presbyterian Church in the United States (widely, but unofficially, known as the "Southern" church) were in conversations which would later lead to reunion. In 1980, both churches approved a project to prepare a new service book which would include a psalter, hymns, and other worship aids. Following the strategy of the United Methodist Church's *Supplemental Worship Resources* series, this project has begun with the publication of service books in paperback, for trial use throughout the church. Task forces are at work to produce a major new service book for the last decade of this century. At present, *The Service for the Lord's Day* and *Holy Baptism* have been published for trial use.[24] Work continues on a psalter, daily prayer, funeral, marriage, the liturgical year, the Christmas cycle, the paschal cycle, ministry to the sick and dying, the lectionary, and ordination resources. A major committee has been appointed to compile a new hymnal for the church, which will attempt to be sensitive to the needs of the diverse membership of the new Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), while including appropriate service music and hymns which use inclusive language.

The reunion of the two Presbyterian churches led to a new constitution whose directory for worship was, sadly, a last minute effort once reunion became a serious possibility. As a result, one of the first tasks of the new denomination has been the writing of a completely new directory to regulate its worship life. At present, a Task Force on a New Directory for Worship is at work to complete the first draft of that constitutional document by mid-1986. This promises to reflect the work of the liturgical renewal movement, take seriously the centrality of word and sacrament as the locus of worship for the Lord's day, be intentional about the catholicity of the worship of the church, and recognize the broad diversity of peoples and styles of worship within the new denomination. In many ways, its work will represent a culmination of all that has been taking place in the renewal of Protestant worship during this century.

VIII

Space does not allow for a discussion of many other aspects of renewal in Protestant worship, such as the emergence of dance, drama, and other arts forms in worship, the inclusion of children as critical in the worshiping community, the appropriation of the worship forms of ethnic and minority groups as a way of enriching the worship of the broader church, the impact of the women's movement with its dual concerns for inclusive language and language about God, the new emphasis upon

[24] "Service For the Lord's Day," *Supplemental Liturgical Resources* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984); and, "Holy Baptism," *Supplemental Liturgical Resources 2* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1985).

ritual action and movement, the impact of the charismatic movement upon the worship of churches in the liturgical center, and, of course, the counter movements of those who respond by reaching back to a different era of their traditions. As is always the case with any renewal movement, its impact causes counter movements in the most tradition-bound quarters where people grow even stronger in their attachment to variations on an earlier way of doing things.

What is going on in Protestant worship is a search for ways to continue work on the agenda set at the time of the Reformation. In approaching the task, those responsible for liturgical renewal are asking two questions: "Is it Christian?" and "Is it equipping the saints for their ministry?" These are the questions by which worship reforms should be evaluated.

WORSHIP BETWEEN THE HOLOCAUSTS

By Michael Downey

"The two holocausts, one fact, the other possibility (or probability), bespeak the reality of powerlessness, meaninglessness, and futurelessness. Here memory and anticipatory symbol converge. As symbols, the two holocausts are evocative of conversion to a God who is there in the midst of human powerlessness and meaninglessness. . . . What form will liturgy take if memory and anticipatory symbol are taken seriously, so as to facilitate the conversion demanded by the crisis brought about by the twofold holocaust?"

In describing the religious practice of his boyhood, Johann Baptist Metz writes: "With our back toward Auschwitz we prayed and celebrated our liturgy. Only later I began to ask myself what kind of religion it is that can be practised unmoved by such a catastrophe."[1] Acknowledging the singular importance of the Holocaust for contemporary Christian life and theology, Metz holds that "everything has to be measured by Auschwitz."[2] He maintains:

> There is no truth for me which I could defend with my back turned toward Auschwitz. There is no sense for me which I could save with my back turned toward Auschwitz. And for me there is no God to whom I could pray with my back turned toward Auschwitz.[3]

What we find in the writings of J.B. Metz is a recognition of the fact of the Holocaust, an acknowledgment of the Christian's complicity in this event, and a determination to engage in Christian life, prayer, and theological reflection in memory of its victims.

In light of the Holocaust, a question must be put: Can we pray at all in the wake of the Holocaust? Metz asserts that Christians can pray after Auschwitz only because there were prayers in Auschwitz.[4] I basically

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[1]Johann Baptist Metz, "Facing the Jews: Christian Theology after Auschwitz," in *The Holocaust as Interruption, Concilium* 175 (1984), p. 28.
[2]J. B. Metz, *The Emergent Church* (New York: Crossroad, 1981), p. 21.
[3]Metz, "Facing the Jews," p. 28.
[4]*Ibid.*, p. 29.

agree, but I would nuance this a bit. Christian prayer after the Holocaust must be *informed* and *shaped* by the prayers at Auschwitz. And it must make room for the memory of its victims. I would also say that Christian worship must take place in full view of the imminence of a second holocaust—the threat of nuclear annihilation.

My purpose here is to reflect upon the Holocaust of the Jews and an imminent nuclear holocaust, while being attentive to their significance for Christian worship. I begin with the assumption that liturgy can, in principle, recognize and be open to alteration by contemporary events. Ruled out is any theory which holds that liturgy remains unaffected by contemporary event or fact, but also any which maintains that it *could* remain unaffected. The question I am concerned with here may be simply put: What shape or form will liturgy take if the reality of a two-fold holocaust is taken seriously? My hope is to advance the discussion of those whose concern is liturgy after the Holocaust of the Jews by pressing the question as to whether or not Christians have taken the Holocaust seriously.[5] But I would also like to take the discussion in a different direction by raising the issue of the imminent nuclear holocaust as anticipatory symbol, and by attempting to determine what impact the two holocausts might have upon our understanding of prayer and worship.

I

Yaffa Eliach's anthology offers a sampling of the way in which Jews prayed during the Holocaust. In "The First Hanukkah Light in Bergen Belsen,"[6] she recounts how the victims construct a makeshift hanukkiah from a wooden clog, strings, and shoe polish to serve as oil. Not far from the heaps of bodies, the living skeletons assemble to participate in the kindling of Hanukkah lights. Aware of the heap of the dead and the assembly of living skeletons, the rabbi hesitates and then proceeds with the third blessing—in which God, addressed as Lord and King of the Universe, is blessed for keeping, preserving, and enabling the people of the covenant to reach this season. When questioned as to why (under the circumstances) he would address God in such terms, the rabbi explains that the large crowd of living Jews, their faces expressing faith, devotion, and concentration as they listen to the rite, provides the justification for this kind of prayer. According to the rabbi, if God has a nation such as this, that in times like these, when during the lighting of the Hanukkah lights they see in front of them the heaps of bodies of their beloved fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, sons, and daughters, and death is looking from every corner, then the rabbi has grounds for reciting the third blessing in praise of God's goodness and providence.

[5]See John T. Pawlikowski, "Worship after the Holocaust," *Worship* 58 (1984), pp. 315–329; see also, Lawrence A. Hoffmann, "Response: Holocaust as Holocaust, Holocaust as Symbol," *Worship* 58 (1984), pp. 333–341.

[6]Yaffa Eliach, "The First Hanukkah Light in Bergen Belsen," in *Hasidic Tales of the Holocaust* (New York: Avon, 1982), pp. 14–16.

The recognition of the "orienting event"[7] of the Holocaust in its own historical particularity brings with it an awareness of our own experience and situation, the fact of what we are living with and confronting—meaninglessness and powerlessness. In what sense can meaning, hope, and promise be found in light of such massive evil and suffering inflicted upon humanity by humanity? Being confronted by the Holocaust, the primordial symbol of evil in our age, brings with it a crisis of vision and a crisis of hope. The churches must deal with the question of how faith in Jesus Christ can be proclaimed and celebrated in worship in light of this event.

As a Christian people, the fate of the Jews, the people of the covenant and the kingdom, has everything to do with our understanding and language of the kingdom. A Christian sense of meaning, hope, and promise derives from and is dependent upon this covenant people. Christians recognize this in the import accorded to the Exodus and the Mosaic covenant in Christian faith, theology, and worship. But, if we have allowed the originating event of Jewish faith, the Exodus, to shape our religious consciousness, have we also allowed the orienting event of the Holocaust to do so? The Jewish people's experience of abandonment by God, abandonment by the rest of the world, and the purposeful attempt by the Nazis to dehumanize and exterminate them has everything to do with our understanding of hope, promise, future, and ultimate meaning, precisely because they are the people of the covenant and it is upon them that ours depends.[8]

For the Jew, the Holocaust is the paradigmatic example of evil. As symbol, it is evocative of conversion to a God who is there on the other side of this evil, this meaninglessness, this senselessness, this powerlessness. Moreover, it is conversion to a God who stands with the chosen precisely in the midst of all this. If Christian faith takes seriously this event, the same sort of recognition of meaninglessness and powerlessness, and conversion undergone in its light, is demanded. Liturgy is to facilitate this. Yet, it seems that contemporary Christian liturgy continues to be celebrated with its back to Auschwitz, much like the liturgies of Metz' boyhood years.

The imminent nuclear holocaust threatens the existence of everything as we know it. Whether or not it is accepted and appropriated as possibility or probability, the imminent nuclear holocaust serves today as the anticipatory symbol of futurelessness. Even if persons and groups do not accept that the world will end in nuclear destruction, the fruits of the anticipatory symbol of the apocalyptic end play deeply upon the

[7]John Pawlikowski, "The Holocaust and Contemporary Christology," in *The Holocaust as Interruption, Concilium* 175 (1984), p. 43.

[8]Arthur Cohen puts it succinctly in the question: "If the first People of God, the inheritors of the ancient covenant, the ethnic descendants of the first Christians—if the history of this People has no relevance for the Christian Church in its fullness then what history at all speaks to Christians?" "In our Terrible Age: the Tremendum of the Jews," in *The Holocaust as Interruption, Concilium* 175 (1984), pp. 13–14.

contemporary psyche. Examples of this may be seen in movements among the young which are built upon and thrive on images and expressions of violence and self-destruction (punk and new wave among others), and in the little concern among the young in many countries when faced with the prospect of long-term unemployment. This is to say nothing of the growing fascination with what has come to be called "Armageddon theology."

To speak of the nuclear holocaust as a symbol which is anticipatory is not to attempt to tame the threat by holding it at bay as something yet to be realized. Rather, it is to suggest that what is anticipated in the nuclear holocaust is already coming to pass in our own day. Nagasaki and Hiroshima anticipate, in this sense, what the nuclear holocaust will be. The fundamental question here, when we are confronted with the anticipatory symbol of the apocalyptic end, is the following: When the world is coming to an end, which means the end of everything as we have ever known it, is God still there? Precisely because the nuclear holocaust signals the end of everything, the question is one of whether or not we can still hope. Is God on the other side of the apocalyptic end?

II

The two holocausts, one fact, the other possibility (or probability), bespeak the reality of powerlessness, meaninglessness, and futurelessness. Here memory and anticipatory symbol converge. As symbols, the two holocausts are evocative of conversion to a God who is there in the midst of human powerlessness and meaninglessness—a God who is ahead of us, before us, on the other side of extermination or complete destruction of humanity and everything as we know it.

While conversion is not liturgy's only function, liturgy is to be formative in the ongoing conversion of the Christian community. What is expressed is impressed. What form will liturgy take if memory and anticipatory symbol are taken seriously, so as to facilitate the conversion demanded by the crisis brought about by the two-fold holocaust? The introduction of prayers of petition that God grant us protection from (or for) nuclear war, or that we recognize the Jews as forebears of Christians hardly tackles the issue. Such gestures further the impression of "situation normal." The trouble with normal is that it always gets worse. Liturgy, if it is to respond adequately to contemporary modes of perceiving and being, and to contemporary fact, must allow itself to be impacted by the memory and anticipatory symbol of meaninglessness and futurelessness signaled in the two-fold holocaust.

Such impact may be made as Christian assemblies begin in earnest to work toward integrating into worship a more profound appreciation for authentic apocalyptic as well as a remembrance of the dead Christ and the descent into hell. A recovery of the remembrance of the dead Christ and the descent into hell, and of authentic apocalyptic, would address Christian communities in light of their experience of meaninglessness

and hopelessness brought about by the two-fold holocaust, while summoning Christians to trust and hope in the midst of their adversity.

Apocalyptic rhetorics gain force when continuities are shattered. A distinguishing characteristic of authentic apocalyptic rhetoric is that it emerges from and speaks to a situation in which everything is at stake.[9] Common to all true apocalyptic is a situation characterized by instability, disorientation, anxiety, and isolation. The apocalyptic emerges where there is a loss of cohesion and an erosion of psychic and cultural structures. Everything is on the line. The motif of panic dominates, due to the "all-or-nothing" nature of a situation involving opposing forces of light and darkness, life and death, order and chaos. It is not merely a matter of the individual in isolation. The matter is one of the survival of the whole of existence, the viability of all life.

Much contemporary fascination with the apocalyptic, especially, though not exclusively, where this is joined to speculation about the nuclear holocaust, focuses rather narrowly on its negative or catastrophic dimension. A recovery of authentic apocalyptic would draw attention to the stage of miraculous renovation and world affirmation, the stage which has passed through the phase of world negation. The hierophany central to the apocalyptic entails both Nay-saying and Yea-saying.[10] The catastrophic imagination alone is, therefore, not genuinely apocalyptic. Apocalyptic in the true sense includes salvation as well as judgment, restoration as well as destruction, the eucatastrophic as well as the catastrophic.

Ancient apocalyptic, replete with revelations, dramas of cosmic warfare, symbols and motifs which strike us as fantastic, spoke effectively to the consciousness and perception of many. Perhaps only its recovery can speak to our threatening sense of the catastrophic and destructive when faced with nuclear annihilation, while holding out a vision and a possibility for the new age to come which evil cannot overcome.

In the rhetorics of the apocalyptic, hope and future play a central role. Since everything is in jeopardy and since all trusted securities are unreliable, the only future that is possible must be thought of in terms of the provident and the miraculous. The hierophany central to the apocalyptic is characterized by enormity and paradox. The language of the apocalyptic is a sort of non-language, as it were. It is a language which breaks continuity with accepted patterns of speech and perception, because all is forfeit to chaos. Yet, it is a speaking of meaning out of meaninglessness. The rhetorics of apocalyptic are peculiar in that they dramatize a group's vision in a situation of hopelessness, broken promises, and disappointment. Into this situation, forfeited to chaos, the

[9]Amos N. Wilder, *Jesus' Parables and the War of Myths*, ed. with preface by J. Breech (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), p. 156.
[10]*Ibid.*, p. 167.

apocalyptist rings out in yea-saying. The apocalyptist says that, in the midst of dire adversity, meaninglessness, powerlessness, and futurelessness, God is coming against all odds and will be victorious.

A note of caution is in order here. Since the nuclear holocaust signals the end of everything as we have ever known it, there is no "other side" or future to imagine. In this, the present crisis stands in radical discontinuity with all others before it. The future can only be on this side of the holocaust. The providential act of God, the miraculous, lies in prevention. The preservation of life through co-creational responsibility, rather than a cosmic playground on the other side of catastrophe, is the future to which we look and to which contemporary apocalyptic rhetorics must speak.

III

Gordon Lathrop offers the reminder that the agenda for liturgical work is not that of "dabbling with superficial poetry,"[11] but of allowing words, images, and symbols to stand forth which are expressive of present needs and which allow us honestly to stand before God with the remembrance of the two-fold holocaust.

It is a biblical, liturgical objective to let lament into the heart of our worshiping communities. Nothing less is adequate for worship in this century. With Lathrop and David Power, I maintain that biblical images of lamentation best serve to give voice to the experience of absence as a distinct mode of God's presence. Disappointment, need, lament all bespeak an experience of a God whose presence is no longer present, yet needed and hoped for. To lament God's absence is to name a longing for what once was and what needs to be.

Here again, Christian prayer needs to be informed and shaped by the prayer of the Jews during the Holocaust.[12] In such prayer, thanksgiving spills over into lamentation. The deeds of the Lord recounted are held up only to draw attention to their absence and to ask for their presence once again. The prayers of Auschwitz are profoundly full of need, of lament, of frustration, of disappointment. Further, they are shot through with imprecation and cries for vengeance. Jews continue to cry to God for vengeance in their memory of the Holocaust. Imprecation and call for vengeance have a profound meaning in their way of praying. Christians generally omit such imprecations from their prayers. Why this is so cannot be answered here, but suffice it to say that imprecation and cries for vengeance would find a more central place in Christian prayer if such prayer were to take seriously the horrors of our age. Between the holocausts, lamentation must be given room in our assemblies as an

[11]Gordon Lathrop, "A Rebirth of Images: On the Use of the Bible in Liturgy," *Worship* 58 (1984), p. 300.

[12]See Eliach, *op. cit.*, especially part one.

expression of the communities' experience, if such communities honestly wrestle with fact and future.

Perhaps there is no image in the Christian tradition which is more suited to lament, more evocative of God's absence, than that of the forsaken servant of God, the dead Christ. The notion of deliverance, central to the tradition of Judaism, is here interfaced with one of non-deliverance. Can one praise and thank a God who has delivered, but is not delivering?

The image of the dead Christ must be distinguished from that of the crucified. The image of the dead Christ is not of one who is rejected, persecuted, tortured, and despised, but of one who is dead, finished, obliterated, gone, no longer there or here. To keep memory of the dead Christ is to embrace, so as to integrate, the negative. With this image to the fore, the vitality of the negative can come into play in the liturgy. Without denying anything that has happened or that could happen, the inclusion of the image of the dead Christ, evocative of God's absence and of non-deliverance, gives shape to a form of liturgy which is a lamentation.

With the reforms initiated since the time of the Second Vatican Council, much of the liturgical renewal has focused upon the pivotal notion of joyful celebration. Systematic theology, as well as liturgical theology, has rather consistently stressed the resurrection as originating event of Christian faith and worship.[13] In a community whose song is alleluia, the vitality of the negative is easily forgotten. Only through the efforts of feminist, liberation, and political theologians have the churches been faced with the "struggle for remembrance"[14] which uncovers the original testimony: "The crucified one lives." Yet, the testimony remains semantically empty if it is overlooked that those who claimed him alive did so having first known and profoundly experienced his death, his absence.

Memory is the heart of liturgy. If contemporary liturgy is to project a world-view pertinent to fact and adequate to common ways of being and perceiving, the vitality of negativity must be given room. The dead Christ is with the dead sons and daughters, mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, past, present, and future. He shares their experience of abandonment, of non-deliverance, of death, of being forgotten—and he is God. Is it too strong to suggest that our liturgy will remain inadequate, will continue to turn its back on fact, as long as it is conducted in such a way that gestures, verbal images, vestments, and other liturgical accoutrements bespeak Christ in his glory and majesty, while, if the truth be faced, the Christian community is living right-smack-dab in the middle of Holy Saturday.

[13]Notable exceptions to this are J. Moltmann's *The Crucified God* and Matthew Lamb's *Solidarity With Victims*, as well as the works of the theologians of liberation.

[14]J.B. Metz, "Facing the Jews," p. 28.

IV

But in what sense is a recovery of the image of the dead Christ useful or appropriate for worship in our age? What purpose does it serve to recover the image of the dead Christ, evocative of negativity, absence, and non-deliverance? Does this image, in fact, serve the purposes of bringing to expression the hope and faith of a people in the midst of crisis and confirm them in that faith?

In itself, it does not. Here the image of the dead Christ must be coupled with that of the descent into hell. The images of the dead Christ and the descent into hell must be understood in light of some contemporary christological insights which draw attention to Jesus as God's compassion.[15] Since Jesus entered so completely in compassion into human suffering, vulnerability, and death, and since God remained faithful to him in his abandonment, the church has an image that provides the basis for its own involvement in the human community and for Christian worship. It is not a question of seeing in the death and descent a propaedeutic for the verification of Jesus' lordship in the resurrection. Nor is it a question of viewing the death of Jesus and the descent as something undergone for us or on our behalf, Jesus being understood here as one who suffers because of and for us. Rather, it is a question of seeing in Jesus the compassion of God entering into solidarity with the suffering victims of all ages, unto death and into hell. This provides the basis for hope in our age. Because Jesus entered so completely into human suffering and death, we as Christians can look to the future in hope and trust that nothing can separate us from the love of God made manifest in Jesus Christ.

It is the memory of this trust and this hope in the midst of abandonment, negativity, and absence that compels Christians to give praise and thanksgiving, and allows them to raise up voices in lamentation.

In treating the question of the possibility for an authentic Christian response to the horrors of Auschwitz "which avoids the temptation both of Christian appropriationism and Christian complacency,"[16] Mary Knutsen alerts us to the dangers posed when well-meaning Christians and others attempt to instruct the Jews about the Holocaust. The Holocaust stands in its own historical particularity. The warning against Christian appropriationism is helpful.

Knutsen speaks of the importance of three factors: solidarity, double alterity, and expectation. The first points to the need for fundamental moral sensibility and principle before the suffering of others, especially victims. The second, double alterity, suggests that within the context of

[15]Examples are Monika Hellwig, *Jesus: The Compassion of God* (Wilmington, Del.: Glazier, 1983), Leonardo Boff, *Jesus Christ, Liberator* (New York: Orbis, 1978), and Jon Sobrino, *Christology at the Crossroads* (New York: Orbis, 1978).

[16]Mary Knutsen, "The Holocaust in Theology and Philosophy," in *The Holocaust as Interruption, Concilium* 175 (1984), p. 72.

compassion for and solidarity with victims, there is the need for recognizing a two-fold otherness: the otherness of the victim, whose suffering can never be appropriated or fully comprehended by another, and the otherness of suffering and death from what should be. This response, when seen in light of what is often the complacency of Christians, is one of outrage, a sense of horror and disappointment in the face of such unbelievable suffering, a passionate awareness that this should not be. At the same time, however, this response includes the third factor: recognition of a promise of the redemption of suffering and death and, along with it, an attentiveness to the apocalyptic, the radically not-yet, of Christian faith.

Worship between the holocausts, if it is to be an authentic Christian response, needs to recover and make room for a rebirth of the central image of the dead Christ and the descent into hell, as well as an authentic sense of the apocalyptic. Liturgical forms must emerge which give expression to a deepened sense of lament, solidarity, otherness, profound hope, and expectation. To allow the two-fold holocaust to shape contemporary liturgy is to give full voice to the experience of the absence of God, yet of a God who is needed and whose coming is hoped for. To face the fact and the future, Christians must voice the groan that while God did establish the covenant through deliverance of the Jews in the Exodus, God did not deliver them during the Holocaust. As people of the covenant and kingdom, their fate is ours. Their prayer must inform and shape ours. Our prayer must be their prayer. Together we await in adversity a God who is to come. Nothing else is adequate in the twentieth century, for it is only through acknowledgment of the fact of the Holocaust of the Jews and the possiblility of nuclear holocaust that we can place ourselves in honesty before God's face.

V

At this point, I would like to give hints as to how the churches might use the images of the dead Christ and the descent into hell, and the apocalyptic, recognizing the great diversity of expressions and forms of liturgical practice in the churches.

The Christian year provides occasion for the implementation of remembrance of the dead Christ and the descent into hell. But the singling out of one or a few days which would then become focal for such implementation runs the risk of losing the sense in which the mystery of Christ's death and descent into hell are at the heart of the mystery celebrated in each liturgy. It is precisely my purpose to recover the images of the dead Christ and descent which have often been forgotten as an important element of Christian worship.

That having been said, a look at the Byzantine rite for Good Friday, and the procession of the dead Christ, a popular practice in the Philippines, may be useful.

In churches of the Byzantine rite, the Good Friday liturgy includes the vespers of the descent from the cross and a service of the entomb-

ment of Christ. In the evening, this is followed, in such churches as the Greek Orthodox, the Melkite-Greek Catholic, and Antiochene Orthodox, by a matins service for Holy Saturday. Particular details of practice may vary. During this service, an ikon of the burial of the dead Christ, or the Epitaphion, a tomb containing a likeness of the dead Christ, is taken from the church building. With the ikon or Epitaphion at the head, the congregation processes around the church three times. Upon entering the church, all those in procession pass under the image of the dead, buried Christ which is elevated in bridge-like fashion by its carriers. The significance here is that of going down with the dead Christ, passing under the yoke of the dead Christ and taking it on.[17]

A good example of how popular narratives portray the Christ may be seen in the poems of the Passion read on Good Friday in the Philippines.[18] Such poems are associated with the procession of the dead Christ. In that country, the lives of the people are scarred by suffering, tragedy, and the never-ending threat of death. They believe in a Christ who is close to them in their struggle, who has entered into solidarity with their misery even to the point of descending into hell. Their belief in this Christ is expressed in, among other ways, the procession of the dead Christ. Instead of trying to make people move painlessly from Good Friday to the Vigil, Christian assemblies might profit from the struggle with the issue of how the celebration of the memory of the dead Christ might become, for the disoriented, anxious, hopeless, and oppressed, a cry of hope, a memory of a death that is itself the promise of liberation.

Here we can learn from liturgical history. In the earliest liturgical forms we know, the Paschal Vigil was the arena for the reading of the Passion. Good Friday did not have its own liturgy. Though later history has given rise to a telling of the Christ story on Good Friday rather than during the Vigil, there remains the task and the possibility of integrating the images of the death and descent into Christian worship in such a way that its integrity and significance are not befuddled in the vain attempt to wean people from Good Friday to the Paschal Vigil.

The two previous examples taken from different liturgical traditions might serve to instruct others in the ways which the images of the dead Christ and descent into hell might be recovered in the liturgical activities of the churches. The task, of course, is not one of imposing such practices upon the local churches in ways that are inappropriate to their own proper liturgical practices. It is rather a question of allowing for appropriate, yet sometimes unprecedented, liturgical forms which give

[17]The rite for matins for Holy Saturday is found in *The Lenten Triodion*, translated from original Greek by Mother Mary and Archimandrite Kallistos Ware (London: Faber and Faber, 1977), pp. 622–655.

[18]For the insights on the role of the dead Christ in the Philippines, I am indebted to David Power, "Liturgy and Culture," *East Asian Pastoral Review* [Manila] (1984), p. 353.

better expression to a people's experience of a sense of loss and the absence or hiddenness of God.

VI

Let us turn now to the question of how this implementation might occur in the various liturgical prayers of the churches, and in the Eucharistic prayer in particular. In speaking of liturgical prayers, I have in mind the patterned, predictable, and public prayers, both formal and informal, written and unwritten, spontaneous and prescribed, by which Christians meet and are met by God in the intentional, corporate coming together of the church. Liturgical prayers of petition, intercession, benediction, and thanksgiving need to take account of the churches' experience of being part of a humanity which lives in a time of disintegration and destruction, a humanity continually compelled to consider whether there are any hopes by which it is possible to face the future. Liturgical prayer must name this experience of crisis of vision and of hope, and address God who is often experienced as absent or hidden. Hence, liturgical prayer takes on the character of lamentation, of a cry that God, once near, has withdrawn or disappeared. Prayer becomes a protest that those who keep the covenant are, for all that, seemingly forsaken by the God who has promised to be with them. The Psalms and wisdom literature are shot through with such sentiments.[19] It is simply a question of retrieving what has often been forgotten or been deemed inappropriate in liturgical prayer, and allowing such expression to come to the center of our assemblies.

In this vein, no other focus is so central to this experience in the Christian context than that of the dead Christ, the forsaken servant, and his descent. This is what provides the basis for hope in our age. No other image is more adequate to name the mystery of God's absence as well as God's self-emptying and complete identification with suffering, negativity, and death. It is in this mystery that we look to the future in hope and trust that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ.

In the Eucharistic liturgy of the Roman Catholic Church, the Eucharistic prayer itself needs to be seen as the locus for this type of prayer. Themes of loss, longing, desire, and lament akin to the Jewish prayers for the dead must be integrated in the prayer of thanksgiving. At present, one often finds among liturgical practitioners great hesitation in diverting from approved texts. But as approved text becomes understood as paradigm, not rigid prescription, greater possibilities may emerge for the expression and impression of what is communicated in the images of the dead Christ and descent into hell and the apocalyptic in this central prayer of the church. Where this liberty is not found, a very practical and, I daresay, realizable goal would be to place before official liturgical and episcopal conferences some Eucharistic prayers of the type I am

[19]See, for example, Psalms 44 and 137; see also the Book of Job.

suggesting, composed by competent liturgists and/or liturgical theologians, in the hope that one or more might be approved for general use. Such a Eucharistic prayer would recount what God has not done, together with what God has done. Expression would be given to a profound sense of lament and protest in the face of the evils and suffering of our age, together with thanksgiving for what God has given. Attention to the themes of deliverance and non-deliverance would be given alongside a firm affirmation that God's victory is brought about through entry into solidarity with suffering victims of all ages, unto death and into hell.

Proclamation of the Word is a response to God's presence and action. In sermonizing, attention must be drawn to the central mystery of the resurrection. But this can and should be done in particular ways which affirm the resurrection as victory and triumph over suffering, evil, and death. It is victory through and in negativity, and triumph through death. Resurrection is not passing over or around these. Evil, suffering, and death exist. Proclamation of the resurrection must take seriously the depth of evil and suffering which persons in the churches experience in our terrible age. Not taking seriously the realities of evil, suffering, and death as negative human experience bespeaks a lack of trust that God will be victorious even in them. Proclamation and sermonizing must draw attention to the lack of cohesion, vision, and hope characteristic of our age, and hold out a vision of God's future wherein the suffering, the weak, the forgotten, and the nameless who have been trampled underfoot will hold pride of place.

VII

What I have attempted to provide here is nothing more than a hint as to how the images of the dead Christ and the descent, and a sense of the apocalyptic, might be implemented in liturgical activity in general, liturgical and eucharistic prayers in particular, and in the sermon or homily.

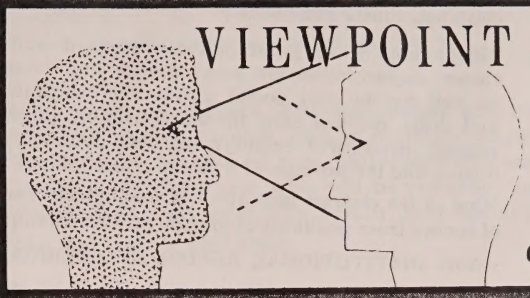
Between the holocausts, the eschatological "not-yet" is the true characteristic of Christian prayer and worship.[20] A deepened sense of the apocalytic, and a remembrance of the dead Christ and Christ's descent into hell, best express and impress our experience of anomie and chaos, crisis and loss of vision brought about by the two-fold holocaust. Such images are strong images, sober and shot through with hope and profound expectation for the manifestation of God's coming. They need room in our assemblies so as to move from the edges to the center.

Central to Christian worship is gathering, reading, praying, sitting, and breaking bread in memory of Christ in the church through the Spirit. Maybe it is the bread of affliction and lament that is to be broken between the holocausts. Maybe there is (or will be) no bread at all, as at

[20]Lathrop, *op. cit.*, p. 300.

Auschwitz. But as we have learned from the voices of its victims, and the voices of the inheritors of the ancient covenant, the ethnic descendants of the first Christians: memory is the heart of liturgy. In our terrible age, we the living stand together with the dead and those yet to come, awaiting the immortality of the flesh and the glorious coming of the Lord Jesus when the power of God's love prevails over evil.

A CONTEMPORARY GLOSSARY



Newsletter Series for Classroom Use

Definitions of Racism

PREJUDICE

"Unfavorable opinion or feeling formed beforehand without knowledge, thought or reason."

—from RANDOM HOUSE DICTIONARY. 1967

RACISM

"Any attitude, action or institutional structure which subordinates a person or group because of their color . . . Racism is not just a matter of attitudes: actions and institutional structures can also be a form of racism."

—from RACISM IN AMERICA AND HOW TO COMBAT IT, U. S. Commission on Civil Rights. 1970

AND

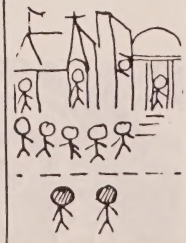
"Racism is different from racial prejudice, hatred, or discrimination. Racism involves having the power to carry out systematic discriminatory practices through the major institutions of our society."

—from WHAT CURRICULUM LEADERS CAN DO ABOUT RACISM. by Dr. Delmo Della-Dora, New Detroit, Inc. 1970

WHITE RACISM

"Power + Prejudice = Racism."

—from DEVELOPING NEW PERPSECTIVES ON RACE, by Pat A. Bidol



"In the United States at present, only whites can be racists, since whites dominate and control the institutions that create and enforce American cultural norms and values . . . blacks and other Third World peoples do not have access to the power to enforce any prejudices they may have, so they cannot, by definition, be racists."

—from EDUCATION & RACISM, National Education Association. 1973

"Racism and white racism mean the same thing, if we are referring to practices of major institutions and dominant societal patterns in the United States today . . . White people are in the majority in the country . . . Thus, government, business, industry, unions, churches, educational and other institutions are almost always dominated by white people. When you combine power with racial discrimination, the result is racism."

—from WHAT CURRICULUM LEADERS CAN DO ABOUT RACISM

are taken." (Examples of institutions are government, business, unions, schools, churches, courts and police.)

INSTITUTIONAL RACISM

"Institutions have great power to reward and penalize. They reward by providing career opportunities for some people and foreclosing them for others. They reward as well by the way social goods are distributed—by deciding who receives training and skills, medical care, formal education, political influence, moral support and self-respect, productive employment, fair treatment by the law, decent housing, self-confidence and the promise of a secure future for self and children."

"One of the clearest indicators of institutional racism is the exclusion of black members of society from positions of control and leadership."

—from INSTITUTIONAL RACISM IN AMERICA, Knowles & Prewitt, Prentice-Hall. 1969

"Some of the most conspicuous examples of (institutional racism) are in housing patterns; segregated schools; discriminatory employment and promotion policies; segregated churches; white control of newspapers, radio and TV; routes selected for construction of expressways or freeways; and textbooks which ignore or distort the role of black people."

—from WHAT CURRICULUM LEADERS CAN DO ABOUT RACISM

INDIVIDUAL VS. INSTITUTIONAL RACISM

"Racism is both overt and covert. It takes two, closely related forms: individual whites acting against individual blacks, and acts by the total white community against the black community. We call these individual racism and institutional racism. The first consists of overt acts by individuals, which cause death, injury or the violent destruction of property. This type can be recorded by television cameras; it can frequently be observed in the process of commission. The second type is less overt, far more subtle, less identifiable in terms of specific individuals committing the acts. But it is no less destructive of human life. The second type originates in the operation of established and respected forces in the society, and thus receives far less public condemnation than the first.

"When white terrorists bomb a black church and kill five black children, that is an act of individual racism, widely deplored by most segments of society. But when in that same city—Birmingham, Alabama—five hundred black babies die each year because of the lack of proper food, clothing, shelter and proper medical facilities, and thousands more are destroyed or maimed physically, emotionally, and intellectually because of conditions of poverty and discrimination in the black community, that is a function of institutional racism."

—from BLACK POWER, by S. Carmichael & C. Hamilton, Vintage. 1967

ETHNOCENTRISM "A tendency to view alien cultures with disfavor and a resulting sense of inherent superiority."

—from WEBSTER'S 3rd INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY

CULTURAL RACISM

"When whites use power to perpetuate their cultural heritage and impose it upon others, while at the same time destroying the culture of ethnic minorities."

—from TEACHING ETHNIC STUDIES, Nat. Council for Social Studies. 1973

Power + Ethnocentrism = Cultural Racism

HISTORY OF RACISM

"Representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several states . . . according to their respective numbers which shall be determined by adding the whole number of free persons . . . three-fifths of all other persons (slaves) . . . and excluding Indians not taxed."

— U. S. Constitution, approved 1778

This is the "3/5 clause" (Article 1-Section 2) which defined the Black slave as property and equal to three-fifths of a man. Despite the assertion of the Declaration of Independence that "all men are created equal," the Constitution denied the slave his human rights. His Indian brother was written out of the Constitution, too. This clause legalized institutional racism for almost 100 years, until the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments to the Constitution defined the Black man as an equal.

(Sources: Eyewitness: The Negro in American History, by William Loren Katz. Pitman Publishing, 1968;

RACISM standards and decisions are made with the best of intentions, but they perpetuate the assumption of white superiority.

— excerpted from DEVELOPING NEW PERSPECTIVES ON RACE

RACIST SOCIETY

"Is one in which social policies, procedures, decisions, habits and acts do in fact subjugate a race of people and permit another race to maintain control over them . . . No society will distribute social benefits in a perfectly equitable way. But no society need use race as a criterion to determine who will be rewarded and who punished. Any nation which permits race to affect those who benefit from social policies is racist."

— from INSTITUTIONAL RACISM IN AMERICA

WHO IS A RACIST?

"All white individuals in our society are racists. Even if whites are totally free from all conscious racial prejudices, they remain racists, for they receive benefits distributed by a white racist society through its institutions. Our institutional and cultural processes are so arranged as to *automatically* benefit whites, just because they are white.

"It is essential for whites to recognize that they receive most of these racist benefits automatically, unconsciously, and unintentionally."

— from EDUCATION & RACISM, National Education Association. 1973

EXAMPLES OF RACISM

1. Teacher to Indian and/or Chicano child: "For your own good, you will be punished if I ever hear you using any language but English in class."

2. A store clerk suspects that Black children in his store want to steal candy but that white children want to buy candy. He treats the Black children as probable delinquents and the white children as probable customers.

3. A suburban community passes a zoning law prohibiting low-cost multiple dwelling housing. Its official reason is to prevent overcrowding, but the effect is to prevent minorities from moving to areas where industry is expanding and jobs are available.

4. A Black and a white family both move and enroll their children in a desegregated school. Previous school records have not yet arrived. The guidance counselor puts the white child into an upper "track" class and the Black child in one of the low "track" classes.

5. A Louisiana state representative recently opposed proposals to eliminate racial labels on blood plasma in his state's hospitals. He ignored the fact that Dr. Charles Drew, a Black surgeon, perfected the modern blood bank system.

6. Textbooks which teach: Columbus "discovered" America . . . The pioneers "settled" the West . . . and have a chapter on "The Negro Problem," "The Indian Problem," but never on "The White Problem."

ASSIGNMENT Cite instances of individual and institutional racism — both overt and hidden — that you have experienced or observed in your community, school and home.

"UNFAMILIAR QUOTATIONS"

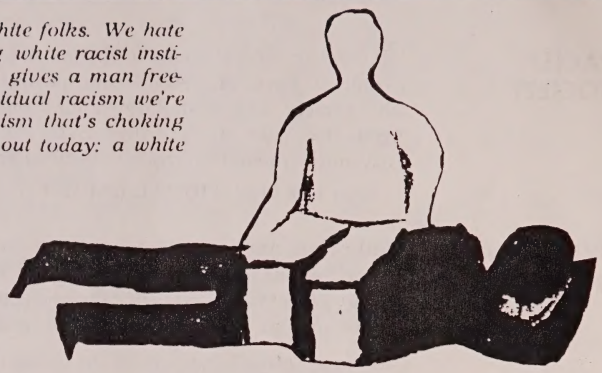
"Concerning the killing of . . . Indians, where blood is once begun to be shed, it is seldom stanched off a long time after."
— John Robinson, spiritual leader of the Pilgrims, 1623

This was the Pilgrim leader's warning when he learned that Miles Standish and a half-dozen men from the Plymouth Colony lured some of the local Indians into their stockade and murdered two chiefs, hung another and shot or hacked to death three more. No white man had been attacked by any Indian. The alleged reason for the massacre was a plot suspected against the Plymouth settlement. It is a plot whose existence is claimed only by the testimony of those who committed the murders. They called it a preventive action, and historians have defined it that way rather than as an early act of individual and savage racism.

Thomas Boylston Adams, president of the Massachusetts Historical Society. (NY Times, 11/25/71.)

SOME THOUGHT-PROVOKING, MOCK-HUMOROUS DEFINITIONS*

"Basically Black folks in America do not hate white folks. We hate this stinking white racist system with these stinking white racist institutions, not you. The United States Constitution that gives a man freedom of expression gives you a right to hate me. Individual racism we're not worried about. It's this damn institutionalized racism that's choking us to death. Here's what Black folks is talking about today: a white racist system that keeps me locked in a Black ghetto all my life so I've got to develop a different culture to survive with the rats and the roaches. And when I break out and come to your institutions, you ask me the wrong tests. You don't ask me about the ghetto. You ask me about the Eiffel Tower."
—Dick Gregory, THE LIGHT SIDE: THE DARK SIDE, Poppy Industries album. 1969



BLACK IS . . . . . being told you must "earn" the rights that the U. S. Constitution guarantees to all Americans.

BLACK IS . . . . . going to court to be judged by a jury of your peers and finding that all your peers look bleached.

INDIAN IS . . . . . watching John Wayne defeat 50 "savage redskins" with a single-shot pistol on the late, late show.

INDIAN IS . . . . . learning in school that your country was "discovered" by Christopher Columbus.

CHICANO IS . . . . . learning in school that the pioneers "settled" the West 200 years after your ancestors were living there.

PUERTO RICAN IS . wondering why white tourists get brown on your island's beaches while you get pale in a mainland ghetto.

A RACIST, SOUTHERN STYLE, is someone who allows Blacks to live close as long as they don't get "uppity."

A RACIST, NORTHERN STYLE, is someone who allows Blacks to get "uppity" as long as they don't live close.

ASSIGNMENT

1—Find the accusations implicit in each of the above "definitions." What kinds of racism are being ridiculed?

2—Make up your own definitions of racism beginning with:
BLACK IS. . . . . WHITE IS. . . . . .

* *Definitions collected from minority sources. For additional definitions see: BLACK IS, by Turner Brown, Jr., 1969; WHITE IS, Preston Wilcox, Editor, 1970. Grove Press.*

additional copies available at a nominal charge from

Racism/Sexism Resource Center for Educators
1841 Broadway (60 Street)
New York, New York 10023
(212) 757-5339

Council on Interracial Books for Children
NOVEMBER, 1983

SUGGESTED RESOURCES

- *INSTITUTIONAL RACISM IN AMERICA, edited by Louis Knowles and Kenneth Prewitt. Prentice-Hall*
- *DISCRIMINATION AMERICAN STYLE, Joe R. and Clairece Booher Feagin. Prentice-Hall*
- *FILMSTRIP: UNDERSTANDING INSTITUTIONAL RACISM, Council on Interracial Books, 1841 Bway, NYC 10023. $32.50*
- *FACT SHEETS ON INSTITUTIONAL RACISM, Council on Interracial Books for Children, 1841 Bway, NYC 10023. $2.00*
- *FILMSTRIP: FROM RACISM TO PLURALISM, Council on Interracial Books for Children, 1841 Bway, NYC 10023. $37.50*

DPoC

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DPOC/WPHR
SPRING 1994 DEPARTMENT REPORT
KINGSPORT TENNESSEE

THE GULF LOWER ATLANTIC DISTRICT (GLAD), DEPARTMENT OF PEOPLE OF COLORS (DPOC) AND THE WHITE PEOPLE HEALING RACISM (WPHR) HAS BEEN VERY ACTIVE OVER THE PAST FIVE MONTHS CONDUCTING A CONFERENCE THAT WE DEVELOPED ENTITLED "CHILDREN OF THE RAINBOW PROMISE"

BEGINNING IN JANUARY WE HOSTED THE CHILDREN OF THE RAINBOW PROMISE CONFERENCE AT ST. JOHN'S IN RALEIGH AND WE HAD ABOUT 35 PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE.

IN FEBRUARY WE HOSTED TWO CHILDREN OF THE RAINBOW PROMISE CONFERENCES, ONE WAS HELD AT MCC CHARLESTON IN CHARLESTON SC WITH AN ATTENDANCE OF ABOUT 20 PEOPLE. THEN WE HOSTED A CONFERENCE IN COLUMBUS GA WITH ABOUT 6 PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE.

IN MARCH WE HOSTED THE CHILDREN OF THE RAINBOW PROMISE CONFERENCE IN MOBILE AL. AND HAD ABOUT 12 PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE.

THIS NOW BRINGS US TO THE PRESENT AND AT THIS WE TIME DON'T HAVE ANY CONFERENCES ON THE CALENDAR. OUR NEXT SCHEDULED EVENT IS THE DPOC/WPHR CONFERENCE TO BE HELD IN DALLAS TX, AUGUST 5-7. ATTENDING THIS CONFERENCE TO REPRESENT OUR DISTRICT WILL BE THE REV. POLLY IRELAND AND MYSELF.

THE DPOC/WPHR WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL CHURCHES THAT HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THE CHILDREN OF THE RAINBOW CONFERENCES AND WOULD LIKE TO ENCOURAGE ALL CHURCHES THAT HAVE NOT PARTICIPATED TO CONTACT EITHER DERRICK SINGLETARY OR REV. POLLY IRELAND.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,
DPOC/WPHR

Standard Operating Procedures

NAME

The name of this UFMCC program shall be **Department of People of Color in UFMCC.**

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

This Department exists to support people of color to actualize personal and spiritual abilities to participate fully in the ministry of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches (UFMCC). This Department also exists to support reconciliation between white people and people of color, so that white people are empowered to live the Gospel through their relationships with people of color.

This Department shall support people of color within UFMCC through:

1. interaction and communication of District Chapters/Departments (DC/D) and Local Church Chapters, except in countries where a different designation would be more appropriate;
2. dissemination of information through the Department newsletter -- at present "The Drum" which will document the history of people of color within the UFMCC, and any other printed materials;
3. developing proposals to General Council regarding policies of credentialing and programming;
4. developing seminars/workshops for District Conferences and General Conferences around group dynamics and cultural awareness;
5. developing worship liturgies which express diverse cultural experiences; and
6. addressing leadership roles on all levels of administration and ministry of the UFMCC.

The primary tools for this ministry are expressed in the following program objectives:

1. Division of Education
2. Division of A.I.D.S. Ministry
3. Division of Ecumenical Witness and Ministry
4. Division of Missiology (Global Vision)
5. Division of White People Healing Racism
6. Division of Evangelism

MEMBERSHIP

This Department consists of those persons of color who are members in good standing of a local UFMCC congregation, new work or special work and who meet the definition of member according to UFMCC By-Laws.

STRUCTURE

This Department's structural responsibility is vested in Department meetings, Executive Committee meetings and District Conference P.O.C. meetings.

Department meetings will take place once per year, alternating between General Conferences of UFMCC and Department of People of Color Conferences. This Department shall be administered by the Executive Committee who implement the directives of the District Chapters/Departments which consist of representation from local church Chapters.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee is that body elected by the Department at its Biennial Conferences to carry on the ministry and administrative affairs of the Department between meetings in an orderly manner. All actions of the Executive Committee must be reported to the Department of People of Color Conferences and General Conferences of UFMCC. All actions of the Department must be reported to and received by the Program and Budget Division of the General Council. This Committee may have up to seven (7) members in number including the Executive Director, Treasurer and Clerk.

Qualifications and Requirements

Members of the Executive Committee must be persons of color and members in good standing within the Fellowship, of obvious spiritual quality and leadership, who are mature and have sound judgment and a proven record of accomplishment. Their term of office shall be two (2) years, except that of the Executive Director whose term shall be four (4) years.

Duties: It is the responsibility of the Executive Committee to propose a budget to the Program and Budget Division of General Council, and to implement such a budget when approved; to distribute minutes of each Department meeting to all District Representatives at least thirty (30) days following Department meetings; to establish and make appointments to Department Divisions and Programs. Executive Committee members are advisors to District Chapters/Departments and are responsible to carry out the directives of the meetings and General Conferences.

Discipline: This Department cannot condone disloyalty, unbecoming conduct or dereliction of duty on the part of any member of this committee. In the case of perceived disloyalty, unbecoming conduct or dereliction of duty, the Executive Director or any member of this committee shall request, in writing, that a ministry of reconciliation be initiated by a designated Chaplain. The person and the Chaplain, appointed by the Executive Committee, must then report their decision/understanding to the whole committee.

If any District Chapter/Department or member of the District Chapter/Department has concerns about an Executive Committee member or has perceived belief of dereliction of duty, disloyalty, or unbecoming conduct, they must submit a written statement of charges at the same time to the person charged and to the Executive Committee, who may hear and not act upon the charges without appeal. The Executive Committee must respond to the written charges within ten (10) days of the receipt of said charges. If for any reason the Executive Committee is compelled to asked to take disciplinary/reorganizational action at the District level, the Executive Committee is required to provide at least seventy-two (72) hours notice to the Chapter/Department and meet with the Chapter/Department [District Representative plus involved persons] by conference call to resolve the issues(s). If there is any change in status, the District Coordinator must then be notified in writing.

Meetings

Executive Committee Meetings will be held at least twice annually. Department meetings will take place once per year during the Department Conference and at the General Conferences of UFMCC.

Officers of the Executive Committee

The Executive Director shall be elected by the Department at the Biennial Conference of the Department, for a term of four years. It shall be the duty of the Director to act as moderator at Executive Committee meetings and Department meetings; must be in consistent communication with Committee members; is responsible with the Executive Committee for implementation of the Department budget and for implementing the directives of the Department. The Executive Director shall represent the Department outside of and within the Fellowship and is responsible to represent the interest and perspectives of the Department to the General Council and General Conference of UFMCC. It shall be the right and duty of the Executive Director, or any representative whom the Executive Director may delegate, to visit all districts within the Fellowship. The Director is responsible to coordinate and administer the work of the Department in achieving its purposes; and to assure with the Executive Committee that every District has a functioning District Chapter/Department. The Executive Director is also the publishing editor of the Department newsletter.

The Department shall be responsible for compensation to its Executive Director. This shall be at least a three-quarter (3/4) time paid position so that the Executive Director can visit district chapters and conduct training on UFMCC structure, to recognize each district's specific needs and gifts and to implement programming that will address their needs and emphasize their gifts.

The Clerk is the official secretary of the Executive Committee.

Duties: Publication of the minutes of all Executive ad Department meetings; maintaining and updating the mailing list; develop a system for the District Chapter/Department to receive quarterly reports from local church chapters and for the District Representative or District P.O.C. Clerk to report to the Executive Committee within thirty (30) days of the receipt of the local church chapter reports; responsible for insuring that the minutes of each meeting are published no later than thirty (30) days after the meetings; shall be familiar with and possess a working knowledge of the UFMCC By-Laws and

the Department SOP's; shall inform the Director of all correspondence, including copies, and maintain a file of all communications and correspondence; shall maintain an up to date list of all District Representatives and local church chapter leaders; shall be accountable to the Executive Committee.

The Treasurer shall possess a working knowledge of figures and/or have some bookkeeping experience and accountability; shall prepare the fiscal budget with the Executive Directive for approval of the Executive Committee; shall be responsible for maintaining accurate records according to print-outs from the UFMCC quarterly reports; shall be responsible at Department conferences for collecting/counting (with one other member or representative), recording and maintaining accurate records and files pertaining to receipts, invoices, cash/checks, budgets, etc., and have them readily available for inspection, and see that arrangements are made for all of the Department's financial obligations; shall prepare an annual financial report and submit the same to the Executive Director for distribution.

Conflict of Interest: The officers listed above shall be ineligible for election or appointment if their presence on the Executive Committee constitutes a conflict-of-interest, (for clarification: spouses, cohabitants, business associates or "important' relationship of substance).

Terms of Office: The term of office for the members of the Executive Committee shall be for two (2) years, except for that of the Executive Director which shall be a term of four (4) years. Elections for office shall take place at the biennial conference of the Department of People of Color in UFMCC.

Vacancies

Executive Director: In the event of a vacancy, the Executive Committee shall become the Acting-Director of the Department, dividing the Director's responsibilities among itself. It shall notify the General Council, all MCC's, UFMCC Committee/Commissions/Boards and Departments of the vacancy. The Executive Committee as Acting- Director shall receive resumes and recommendations for a period of at least three (3) months. A recommendation shall be made by the Executive Committee and presented to the Board of Elders for appointment. The appointment is made to fulfill the remainder of the vacant term. UFMCC will then be notified of the appointment.

Executive Committee: In the event of a vacancy on the Executive Committee, the Executive Director will make recommendations, with input from P.O.C. District Representatives and UFMCC leadership, to the Executive committee of a person to fill that term. The appointment must be approved by the full Committee. The appointment will be effective until the next Department meeting, at which time an election may take place to fill the unexpired term.

Business Meetings/Voting Procedures

The business meetings of the DPOC in UFMCC shall be conducted in the following manner:

1. The business meeting of the DPOC will be held concurrently with the business meeting of WPHR.
2. The needs/wishes of District Chapters/Departments shall be expressed through the elected local District DPOC Representative. The District Representative carries with her/him one (1) vote for his/her District.
3. Proposals/resolutions must be received by the Executive Director at least ninety (90) days prior to the Annual Meeting.
4. The Executive Director will distribute information received to all elected local District Representatives sixty (60) days prior to the Annual Meeting.
5. Workshops should be conducted by the elected local District DPOC Representative at the local district/church level prior to said meeting.

District Chapters/Departments

Each District Chapter/Department shall consist of those persons of color who are members of a UFMCC District congregation, new or special work and who meet the definition of member in good standing according to UFMCC By-Laws.

Purpose and Goals

The District Chapter/Department function shall include but not be limited to:

1. offer support and a network for people of color;

2. gather and disseminate spiritual, cultural, social and educational information;
3. develop worship liturgies which express diverse cultural awareness;
4. gather and disseminate health information according to the health needs of people of color, e.g., A.I.D.S., sickle cell anemia, forced sterilization, sexually transmitted diseases, etc.;
5. facilitate a fund-raising effort at least once per year for the Department;
6. recommend persons of color within the District for both District and Fellowship appointments;
7. provide the forum for meetings at its District Conferences, by communicating with the District Coordinator for arrangemnts.
8. develop (with input from local chapters) the format for District P.O.C. elections and meetings;
9. determine the term of office for its officers and develop structure; and
10. .keep records of each meeting and activities, sending pertinent information to DPOC Executive Director to be included in "The Drum," newsletter or other periodicals of UFMCC.

Responsibilities

Each District will elect, at its District People of Color meeting, a person of color who will represent the District at the Department meetings and conferences. The District Representative carries with her/him one (1) vote for his/her District. The District Representative will send a report to the Executive Director on a quarterly bais (tape, written, other . . .).

Each District Chapter/Department (DC/D) will have a Treasurer who will possess a working knowledge of figures and/or have some bookkeeping experience and accountability; shall maintain accurate records and files pertaining to receipts or formal expense accounts. The Treasurer shall see that all District Chapter/Department financial obligations to and within the community are met and shall be accountable to the District Chapter/Department.

Each District Chapter/Department shall have a clerk who shall take minutes, maintain a district mailing list of people of color, keep records of correspondence, shall be accountable to the District Chapter/Department and shall submit quarterly reports to the Executive Committee if there is no District Representative.

The District Chapter/Department shall be responsible to notify the Executive Director of the name, address, phone and church affiliation of the District Representative, Treasurer and Clerk. The DC/D shall also be responsible to the Executive Committee for convening meetings at District Conferences; sending pertinent information to the Executive Director; as well as notifying the Executive Committee of changes in structure, personnel, financial status, local church chapter visitations and District activities to be included in "The Drum."

The DC/D shall communicate/network with District White People Healing Racism.

LOCAL CHURCH CHAPTERS

Purpose: The Local Church Chapter exists to:

1. establish relationship with people of color in local church and community;
2. meet at least quarterly to assess the needs of local people of color;
3. develop structure for meeting and reporting to the District Chapter/Department;
4. promote attendance of people of color at the local church, District, Department and General Conferences and meetings and other functions;
5. promote attendance of people of color at functions and events which focus on the issues of people of color;
6. receive and distribute local, District, Department and Fellowship publications; and
7. communicate with white people or persons to network with the Division of White People Healing Racism.

Membership: Each local church shall determine its criteria for membership subject to the approval of the DPOC Executive Committee. Note: If the Local Chapter wishes, it may give itself a name; e.g., Say Amen, prisms, Cousins of the Heart . . .

ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS

Adoption: These Standard Operating Procedures shall become effective immediately upon adoption by the Biennial Conference of the Department of People of Color in UFMCC and shall become binding upon all members and District Chapters/Departments and Local Church Chapters within the Department, upon approval by the General Council.

Amendments: These Standard Operating Procedures may be amended or repealed at any duly convened Biennial COnference. Such amendments or repeals can only be effective if two-thirds of the duly authorized representatives vote in favor of such amendments or repeals.

PROCEDURES FOR SOP PROPOSALS

All SOP proposals submitted to the Executive Committee, shall be sponsored by a local church chapter, District Chapter/Department, Division, Commission or Committee of the Department of People of Color in UFMCC.

Each proposal shall be submitted in writing, on separate sheets(s) of paper with the name of the group from which it comes.

Adopted November 10, 1990

Derrick L. Singletary, III

DPOC Chairperson

▼

G.L.A.D.

DEPARTMENT OF
PEOPLE OF COLORS

P.O. Box 33637

Raleigh, NC 27636

919-851-3163

G. L. A. D.
DEPARTMENT OF PEOPLE OF COLORS

POST OFFICE BOX 33637
RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA 27636

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DERRICK L. SINGLETARY, III CHAIRPERSON

FELLOW CHURCHES OF G.L.A.D.,

I INVITE YOU TO PARTICIPATE IN CELEBRATING DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. HOLIDAY BY CELEBRATING THE UNITY AND DIVERSITY THAT DR. KING STOOD UP FOR YOU AND ME. ON SUNDAY JANUARY 15 I ASK THAT YOU LIGHT THE CANDLES OF THE RAINBOW TO SIGNIFY ALL OF THE DIVERSITY AMONG THE CHILDREN OF GOD. I ASK THAT YOU READ THE PHRASE THAT GO WITH EACH CANDLE AS YOU LIGHT IT.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT WE MAKE PEOPLE OF ALL WALKS OF LIFE FEEL WELCOME AND COMFORTABLE AS WE EMBRACE PEOPLE INTO OUR SERVICES/CONGRATIONS.

THE PHRASES THAT YOU ARE READING WERE CREATED AS A PART OF THE CHILDREN OF THE RAINBOW PROMISE CONFERENCE THAT IS HOSTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PEOPLE OF COLORS IN CONJUNCTION WITH WHITE PEOPLE HEALING RACISM OF OUR DISTRICT. THIS ONE DAY CONFERENCE WAS ORGANIZE TO SHOW OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DIVERSITY WITHIN OUR CHURCHES. FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT ME.

I AM CURRENTLY CREATING A MAILING LIST THAT WILL HAVE A LOCAL CONTACT FROM EACH CHURCH. IT MAY BE EITHER OF THE TWO GROUPS (DPOC OR WPHR) I STRONGLY ENCOURAGE ONE FROM EACH. I WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR HELP IN THESE MATTERS.

YOURS IN CHRIST,

DERRICK SINGLETARY, III
DEPARTMENT OF PEOPLE OF COLORS, CHAIRPERSON
OF THE GULF LOWER ALANTIC DISTRICT

cc: REV. JAY NEELY

INCLUSIVE CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP

PRELUDE

EXPLANATION OF THE CIRCLE

THE SMUDGE A TIME OF CLEANSING & CENTERING

One: God brings us from the far countries,
People: *And gathers us from the four corners of the earth.*
One: Let us gather now in unity and diversity.
All in unison:
(Chime, turn to the N) - *To the North is sound wisdom.*
O Spirit of God, visit us with your wisdom and awaken ours.
(Chime, turn to the S) - *The South is the place of innocence and trust.*
May we perceive closely our nature of heart.
(Chime, turn to the W) - *The West is the look within place*
which speaks of the introspective nature of humanity.
(Chime, turn to the E) - *The East is the place of illumination*
where we can see things clearly, far and wide. Amen.

OPENING HYMN #190 "Children of the Rainbow Promise'

INVOCATION

God, may the presence of your Holy Spirit, which is everywhere, be especially here now comforting us, but also confronting us with the responsibility to make your word of love become flesh in our actions today. Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE RAINBOW CANDLES

Red "We light the red candle to symbolize beauty in people of colors. May we tear down the walls of racism and prejudice that separate and alienate us from each other."

Purple "We light the purple candle to symbolize the innate beauty of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transsexual people. May we realize our own beauty and work and pray for the acceptance of all people as created in the image of God."

Orange "We light the orange candle to symbolize the beauty of mentally challenged persons. May we find in their simplicity the true nature of God."

Blue "We light the blue candle to symbolize the beauty of physically challenged person. We are reminded of the blue accessibility signs. May we see ourselves as people with varying abilities, working together for community, understanding that all people are gifted and need opportunity for expression."

Yellow "We light the yellow candle to symbolize the beauty in the many manifestations of God's light. May we be refractors affirming the hope that one day all peoples of faith will acknowledge our kinship as children of the same God."

Green "We light the green candle to symbolize the beauty of the earth. May we fulfill our role as caretakers of God's world and realize that as the earth belongs to us, we also belong to the earth.

STATEMENT OF FAITH OF THE KOREAN CHURCH

We believe in the one God, creator and sustainer of all things,
Parent of all nations, the source of all goodness and beauty, all truth and love.
We believe in Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, our teacher,
example, and Redeemer, the Savior of the world.
We believe in the Holy Spirit,
God present with us for guidance, for comfort, and for strength.
We believe in the forgiveness of sins, in the life of love and prayer,
and in grace equal to every need.
We believe in the Word of God contained in the Old and New Testaments
as the sufficient rule both of faith and practice.
We believe in the church, those who are united in the living God
for the purpose of worship and service.
We believe in the reign of God as the divine will realized in human society,
and in the family of God, where we are all brothers and sisters.
We believe in the final triumph of righteousness and the the life everlasting. Amen.

HEBREW READING — Genesis 9:12-16

PRAYER FOR FREEDOM

One: God of our weary years--
People: *How long shall we wait, O God, and when shall we be free?*
Two: We are your people, scarred by racism, all isms, and disfigured by prejudice. Seemingly forgotten by all save Jesus.
People: *When shall we be free?*
One: God of our silent tears--
Leader: In closets not of our making and ghettos not of our choice, wearied by the struggle, bleeding, bruised, and tired. Tempted to lay our burdens down and softly steal away home.
People: *Our silent tears still flow, O God; our cries rise up to you.*
One: Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way--
Two: And lovingly called us yours, and sweetly whispered our names, Not "forever oppressed" but "wholly redeemed" Not "Downtrodden slave, abomination" but "child of God."
People: *Lest our feet stray from the places where we met our God. Lest our hearts forget Thee, drunk on the wine of the world.*
One: Shadowed beneath Thy hand, may we forever stand--
Two: And not only stand, O God, but dance--a righteous gospel step. For your daughters have visioned it, and your sons have dreamed it.
People: *Some day we shall be free!*
One: True to our God, true to our native land.
People: *And to your realm, O God.*
Two: And to ourselves as you have seen us.
People: *And to the vision of a better day to come.*
All: *Amen.*

HYMN #264 — "Mother and God"

SERMON READING: — Ecclesiasticus 43:11-12

SERMON "Riding the Rainbow" — Rev. Polly Ireland

HYMN #385 — "Jesus, Partner, Lover, Friend"

PSALM 33 CHANTED MONOTONE WITH UNDERLINED SECTIONS ON A HIGHER NOTE

One: Blessed are those whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.
People: Blessed are those whom God does not hold guilty.
One: When I did not declare my sin, my body wasted away.
People: *My strength was dried up by the heat of the summer.*
One: I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not hide my iniquity.
People: *I confessed my transgression to you, then you forgave the guilt of my sin.*
All: *Be glad in Yahweh and rejoice, shout for joy, you upright in heart.*

SHARING TABLE FELLOWSHIP

One: As these grains that were once scattered on the hillsides and plains and now are brought together into one loaf, so gather your people, O Wisdom-Spirit, into the community of justice and peace.
People: *May the world of hierarchy and oppression vanish away and a new age of love and joy between sisters and brothers arise.*
One: We are the new wine of life that flows in the branches of the vinetree. We remember our brother, Jesus, who poured out his blood to water the roots of this vine. We also remember the many sisters and brothers who have died that a new world might be born.

All: SPEAK ALOUD ANY NAMES OF LEADERS OR FRIENDS WHO HAVE DIED IN THE STRUGGLE

One: In sharing this blest cup, we share our lives with one another for the sake of the beloved community.
People: *We pledge to continue the struggle until all humankind can sit down together in peace and joy at the table of life.*

THE BREAD AND JUICE ARE PASSED WITH THE FOLLOWING WORDS:
"The Bread of Life" "The Cup of Salvation"

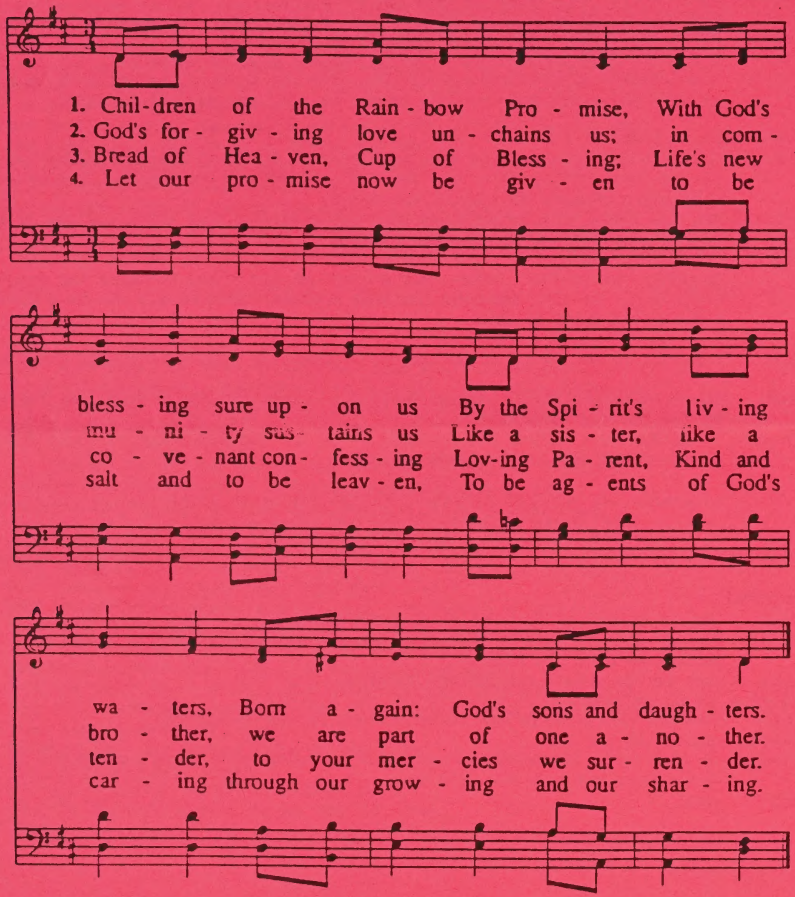
SUFI DANCE "I See the Love of God in You"

BENEDICTION

One: God is always on the side of the oppressed.
People: *We are only as near to God as we are far from the person or group or nation we like the least.*
One: Our job is reconciliation and justice.
People: *Is it not easy.*
One: We will likely never see total victory in our lifetimes.
People: *But it is our job.*
One: Go with God's blessing, knowing that no matter how rough the going, God's love and care are with you.
All: *Amen.*

Children of the Rainbow Promise 190

L.M.

TRYGGARE KAN INGEN VARA

5 O Immortal God of Glory,
When we tell the world your story,
May they see we're not in factions;
May they know you by our actions.

6 By this covenant we're saying
We're your Church, and here we're staying,
Not a building with a steeple,
But God's loving, caring people!

TEXT: Barry Wichmann, 1984
MUSIC: Swedish folk melody
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CROSSROADS

A place where different cultures meet; a crucial point or place

Newsletter of the African-American Lesbian Gay Alliance

January/February 1992 **Volume VI, Number 1**

Out Of The Closet

The now famous admission by former NBA superstar Majic Johnson that he contracted the AIDS virus because of his promiscuous lifestyle opened up the eyes of some people to help them see that one does not have to be gay, lesbian or bisexual to contract or spread the virus. Some gay, lesbian, and bisexual people say that people refused to see the story behind Johnson's admission.

"They always want to go back to the original sin that (AIDS) came from a gay person; America still thinks that," says Carlton Rutherford, a clinical social worker. "We need to change that."

The lack of attention involving this issue, plus pressures resulting from discrimination against lesbians, gays, and bisexuals, lead to formations of organizations like AALGA. AALGA was formed to organize the African American gay community to improve their situations, explained Charles Nelson. "We do that primarily by trying to create a safe space ... We're looking at churches who condemn, health care systems that either do not allow access or limit access to gays and lesbians, and at agencies who say that they're providing certain information when they are not."

AALGA is only one of a number of support groups, advocacy groups, and other organizations in the Atlanta area that specifically welcome lesbians, gays and bisexuals and place their problems and issues on the front burner. Nelson, a former co-chair of AALGA, further explains, "Because I am a gay or lesbian person, it does not mean that I am less Black or less concerned about Black issues. I don't separate my Blackness or gayness. It's okay to be Black; it's okay to be gay."

Editor's Note: December 14, 1991 the Atlanta Voice Newspaper published an in depth article on Atlanta's gay and lesbian community. This excerpt is from that article. The Atlanta Voice is Black owned and Black staffed.

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Happy New Year from the Staff of Crossroads

'A Warm December'

It's about survival ... It's about empowerment ... It's about life ...

Vega Press of New Jersey, dedicated to the publication and promo tion of minority artists, announces the publication, in February, 1992 of 'A Warm December.' In 1989 Vega Press published the ground breaking book 'Men of Color,' which was nominated for the 1990 Lambda Literary Small Press Award. It was the first compre hensive collection of literary and visual work to explore the black male couple with poetry, illustrations, and photographs. In praise of 'Men of Color,' 'A Warm December' also uses poetry, illustrations, and photographs, while introducing the work of new writers and artists: Rory Buchanan, Carl Cook, Adisa Osei Chionesu, Richard Evans, Maurice O. Franklin, w.e.s., Vega, and Jerome Whitehead. The three different mediums are delicately woven together, like a fine quilt to tell a story of love, survival and empowerment, against a seasonal background, in a time of victimization and the need for self empowerment during the AIDS crisis.

Hot ... Wild ... and Electric ... Vega combines a strong graphic background with the human figure, 'the simplest and purest from of art,' to create images which are visually and emotionally stimulating. His work has appeared in recent years in the Advocate, Blueboy, Black/Out, In The Life, Brother to Brother, and The Road Before Us. A graphic artist, poet, and photographer, Vega is currently working on a line of black gay greeting cards, a play entitled 'Kiss of Life,' a series of interviews entitled 'Father, Brother, Lover, Son,' and a quarterly erotic magazine.

For further information contact: Michele Karlsberg at (718) 351-9599.

Who Will Protect Us

by Patrick Bell

In the early morning hours of December 26, 1990, Madame Edna Brown was murdered in her home in Southwest Atlanta. Seven day later, the body was discovered hidden beneath a blanket in her bedroom. Her apartment was ransacked and most of her valuables were stolen.

There was an enormous outcry from the community for justice to be served. After around the clock pressure on city hall and the police department by the African American Lesbian Gay Alliance and other politically involved members of the community, the investigation of her murder was taken more seriously. Within days, Sanders L. Taylor was arrested and charged with murder, aggravated assault, grand theft, and theft by taking.

It is reported that a neighbor saw Mr. Taylor removing property from the apartment around the time the murder took place. When the suspect was arrested he was driving Edna's car and her stolen property was located in his home.

December 12, 1991, Sanders Taylor was sentenced to just seven years in prison. In a plea bargain agreement with Assistant District Attorney Don Henderson, Sanders was charged only with grand theft and theft by taking. The charges of murder and aggravated assault were placed on the "dead docket," according to sources close to the case. Taylor will be eligible for parole in two years.

Legal experts have told Crossroads that when this occurs, the county has seven years to bring the charge of murder against Taylor. But they also say that the possibility of this happening is slim.

The life of a well respected member of our community and an outspoken advocate for transvestites has been taken by a cold and calculated murderer. The magnitude and horror of his crime has been overlooked and brushed under the rug by the Fulton County District Attorney's office. Once again, it is evident to all of us in the gay and lesbian community in Atlanta that the district attorney's office does not care about the lives and human rights of gays and lesbians.

Unfortunately, Edna's death did not spark what many of us hoped would be the beginning of a better understanding of the lives of transvestites, cross dressers, and transgendered people. In late 1991, three Black transvestites were murdered. Including Jean Powell, the woman who discovered Edna's body. Investigators believe the same person committed the murders. As of the date of this article, there are no leads in the investigations and the police are no longer pursuing the cases.

My question is: Who will protect us when we are violated?

We as Black lesbians and gay men live invisible and misunderstood lives. Those who are elected and paid to protect our basic rights as citizens, often turn their backs on us. I can not keep from thinking that if Edna or any of the others had been white, female and murdered in the bedrooms of their Buckhead homes that Sanders L. Taylor and the other murderer would be fighting off the death penalty.

People of Color Leadership Conference

The Department of People of Color of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches (UFMCC) along with the Division of White People Healing Racism of UFMCC is sponsoring a leadership conference Saturday, February 22, 1992.

The Department of People of Color exists to support people of color and actualize their personal and spiritual abilities in order to participate fully in the ministry of the UFMCC. White People Healing Racism is a division of the Department of People of Color. It's purpose is to facilitate a learning and growth process among white people which will make them more aware of how racism works in the world, what they do to perpetuate it, and what we all can do to stop it.

The program includes presentations on Conflict and Anger, and the Costs and Joys of Leadership. Rev. Joy Browne, Chaplain at Spelman College is scheduled to speak during the Conflict and Anger presentation. Panel discussions are planned on Community Outreach and Goal Setting, both are open floor discussions. The panel discussions on Community Outreach will include AALGA mem bers LeeVaughn Smith of First MCC and Darryl Walker, panel moderator. of All Saints MCC.

The conference will be held at First MCC, 800 N. Highland Avenue. For more information and to receive a registration form, call (404) 325-5208.

CROSSROADS, the African-American Lesbian Gay Alliance Newsletter is published bi-monthly by the Public Relations Committee of AALGA as its official communique. There is no copyright, and readers are encouraged to reproduce any article noting the source of the information. Submission deadline is the 25th of the month prior to publication. The Public Relations Committee reserves the right to edit submissions without changing the writer's intent. For more information, write to Patrick Bell, AALGA Newsletter, 2401 North Hill Pkwy., Chamblee, GA 30341 or call (404) 458-3003.

Patrick Bell
Editor

AFRICAN-AMERICAN LESBIAN GAY ALLIANCE
Post Office Box 50374, Atlanta, Georgia 30302

Darryl Walker
Layout

At 36

by Charles Harpe

I guess age does have a lot to do with my need to put things into their proper perspective. Jokingly, I have told my friends that I am now the age of the men I have always found most attractive. To me, men in their mid-thirties seem to be at a point where they can begin to apply the lessons life has taught them to reconciling themselves with their pasts, dealing constructively with their present situations, and planning their futures. They are clear about where they are coming from and where they are going, what they want and what they don't want. I believe that now after twelve years of therapy, of confronting my pain and just plain struggling, I, too, am at a point of clarity. I know who I am.

At 36, my homosexuality is no longer an issue in my life. It no longer defines me or confines me. It is simply a part of me, a relatively small part, in relation to the talents, ambitions, skills, dreams, hopes, desires, and needs that make me the man I am today; and the man I will become. In accepting this, I liberate myself from the silence, the shame, hate, pain, anger, frustration, and bitterness I have experienced from accepting so many lies as truths. I am a Black gay man. There is nothing wrong with me! This is now my armor and my weapon to be used in reconciling my past, dealing with the realities of my present, and shaping my future.

My father died in 1981. He was an alcoholic and my mother complemented his disease with her equally serious addictions to pain and anger. Together they created a household full of tension, chaos, and violence, but empty of love and nurturing. I hated my father for being a drunk. I hated my mother for not leaving him. I hated myself for not being able to make things better. It was in this context that my mother called me a faggot and I began to confront my sexuality.

At 36, I am learning to stop hating, to forgive my parents and, most of all, myself. I have memories of my father carrying me on his back, helping me with my homework, picking me up in his arms after I was hit by a car. He was an intelligent man who loved to read. He encouraged me to excel in school and to go on to college. These things, even when weighed against all the horrors of his drinking, were enough for me to have loved him.

I am talking more to my mother now and understanding her better. I believe that she always did the best she could. I know she is a women of great strength and determination who has passed on to me her sense of humor and her appreciation of the finer things in life. She accepts the reality of my homosexuality and works to be loving and supportive of me.

At 36, I am learning how to love myself, how to take pride in my accomplishments, how to accept that my needs and wants are important enough for me to work to fill them, and how to accept my own value and worth. Through loving myself I have managed to attract into my life some truly dynamic men that I am honored to call friends. With them I have come to know a safe place where there is caring and support, where I can find escape form the pain of racism and homophobia that so fills the world, where I can receive validation of my experiences and perspectives, where I can truly just be me and be loved for it.

At 36, who am I? I am a self-empowered Black gay man.

(Note: Charles Harpe resides in Philadelphia. He is a graduate of Syracuse and Drexel Universities. You can find his complete essay in Brother to Brother: New Writings by Black Gay Men.)

GMHC Fellowship

AALGA and BWMT member, Duncan Teague, has yet another diamond in his tierra. Congratulations are in order for his latest coup. January 13th through February 7th, Duncan will take part in the Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC) Fellowship Program in New York. The management training program was designed to provide more skills in program development as well as short and long range planning.

Several years ago, the GMHC recognized that there was a severe shortage of qualified personnel to manage AIDS and HIV related service agencies.

"What they found were a group of people in the community who were fabulous at organizing and promoting, but lousy at managing . . ." explains Teague, "on the other hand, there were people who had excellent managerial skills, but were ignorant of AIDS and HIV issue's." He goes on to say, "this program was created to fill that gap."

Duncan is one of three fellowship recipients and the first African American from Atlanta. He will work with the Research and Evaluation Coordinator within the Education and Prevention Department at GMHC.

Per usual, he's planning a big "Amethyst" style send off for himself by hosting/hostessing a birthday/fund raising party at his home on January 11th from 8 p.m. until.

Have a great time in New York, Duncan. And bring a bite of the Big Apple back for us!

November 25, 1991

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

The contributors to The Road Before Us (100 Gay Black Poets), and I, wholeheartedly thank you for co-hosting the reading/reception at Georgia State University, last November 1st.

Duncan Teague and I enjoyed ourselves. We also liked sharing some of the writing in the anthology with your members and guests. Our community's support means a lot to us, gay black writers. Once again, thank you.

Peace, strength, and lots of love.

Assoto Saint, Editor

The Bridge Poem

I've had enough
I'm sick of seeing and touching
Both sides of things
Sick of being the damn bridge for everybody

Nobody
Can talk to anybody
Without me
Right?

I explain my mother to my father my father to my little sister
My little sister to my brother my brother to the white feminists
The white feminists to the Black church folks the Black church folks
To the ex-hippies the ex-hippies to the Black separatists the
Black separatists to the artists the artists to my friends' parents . . .

Then
I've got to explain myself
To everybody
I do more translating
Than the Gawdamn U.N.

Forget it
I'm sick of it

I'm sick of filling in your gaps
Sick of being your insurance against
The isolation of your self-imposed limitations
Sick of being the crazy at your holiday dinners
Sick of being the odd one at your Sunday Brunches
Sick of being the sole Black friend to 34 individual white folks
Find another connection to the rest of the world
Find something else to make you legitimate
Find some other way to be political and hip
I will not be the bridge to your womanhood
Your manhood
Your human-ness

I'm sick of mediating with your worst self
On behalf of your better selves
I am sick
Of having to remind you
To breathe
Before you suffocate
Your own fool self

Forget it
Stretch or drown
Evolve or die

The bridge I must be
Is the bridge to my own power
I must translate
My own fears
Mediate
My own weaknesses

I must be the bridge to nowhere
But my true self
And then
I will be useful

Kate Rushin (born 1951, Syracuse, New York) grew up in Lawnside and Camden, New Jersey. She has a B.A. in Theatre and Communications (Oberlin, 1973) and has taught poetry workshops for adults and children.

The Atlanta Feminist Women's Chorus, begun in 1981 by director Linda Vaughn, has 82 singing members..

In July, AFWC will travel to Denver to take part in the GALA IV Choral Festival, an international choral festival of gay and lesbian choruses. Choruses from all over the U.S. and from overseas – including London and Berlin – will gather for this exciting musical event. Then in December, AFWC will appear in concert in Atlanta with composer and singer Cris Williamson for an unforgettable musical evening.

For further information about the chorus, call Charlene Ball at 523-7455.

Obituaries

AALGA extends sympathy to the family and friends of Mr. Kenneth L. Marshall, an assistant district attorney for Fulton County, who was memorialized on Thursday, January 2nd. Kenneth died December 21, 1991 at Piedmont Hospital in Atlanta. He received a degree in economics from Brown University and a law degree from Duke University School of Law in 1976. He was chairman of the "Home Front" Committee of AID Atlanta, which established and maintained residences for people with AIDS who had no place to live. He was a director of Planned Parenthood of Atlanta, a founding member of Black and White Men Together/Atlanta, a founding board member of the Atlanta Campaign for Human Rights, and he belonged to the Brown Club of Atlanta, Friends Atlanta, the Atlanta Urban League, and West Hunter Baptist Church.

In lieu of flowers, the family request's that contributions be made to Project Open Hand, 1080-R Euclid Ave., N.E., Atlanta, Georgia 30307.

AALGA also extends sympathy to the family and friends of Miss Jean Powell, Mr. Joseph James, and Mr. James Newton, deceased in the Fall of 1991. Rest in Peace!

DPOC/WPHR Conference Schedule and Program

First Metropolitan Community Church
800 N. Highland Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia

February 22, 1992

8:00	CHURCH OPENED FOR EARLY ARRIVAL	
9:00	BREAKFAST AND WELCOMING	
9:30	FELLOWSHIP STRUCTURE	Rev. Jay Neely GLAD District Coordinator
10:00	DISTRICT STRUCTURE	Raymond Barreras, Ph.D. Lay Representative, First MCC
10:30	BREAK	
10:45	DPOC STRUCTURE	Rev. Delores Berry UFMCC DPOC Executive Committee J. R. Finney II GLAD DPOC Chairperson
	WPHR STRUCTURE	Judy Kiser UFMCC WPHR Steering Committee Rev. Polly Ireland UFMCC WPHR Steering Committee
1:00	LUNCH	
2:00	CONFLICT AND ANGER	Rev. Bob Darst GLAD WPHR Chairperson Rev. Joy Browne Chaplain, Spelman College
2:45	BREAK	
3:00	COMMUNITY OUTREACH PANEL DISCUSSION	Darryl Walker, Panel Moderator, All Saints MCC Rev. Reid Christensen, First MCC Vivian Gillan, MCC Mobile Rev. Larry Nunnley, MCC Nashville Glenna Shepherd, All Saints MCC Rev. LeeVaughn Smith, First MCC
4:00	COSTS AND JOYS OF LEADERSHIP	Rev. Delores Berry
4:45	BREAK	
5:00	GOAL SETTING (open floor discussion)	Facilitators: J. R. Finney II and Rev. Bob Darst
6:15	DINNER	
7:30	WORSHIP AND HEALING SERVICE	Rev. Delores Berry, Preaching

Class vs. culture - need for clarification of differing style
Earnestness/passion - not anger - Argument/debate is not anger.
Confrontation/dialogue - confronting - Debate on authority -
Males trained to be in control, not show emotion - Only
allowable emotion anger -

Most white cultures! Italian, Hispanic, Jewish, Hungarian
not true.
Logical as emotional. Anger is catalyst for change.
Owning anger - Not "You make me feel angry."
Verbal assertiveness.
Fight - exchange words - fight white
Fights - exchange blows - Black.

Homogenization - basic constructs very different -
Anglo/Euro - Control vs. respect/regard for the other.
African-Am - privacy perceived as hostile
A is not B / A is better than B / A vs. B / A over B = Dualism
"Passionate scholar" misnomer in A-E culture.
Why is discussion threatening? - why solve? Cannot be
done in one day; has existed for centuries.
A/E - uses information differently - ? prove God -
Atomization vs. Synthesization -

Male vs female -

[redacted] GLAD
MWIND-DISC

ST. JOHN'S METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH

805 Glenwood Avenue ▼ PO Box 5626 ▼ Raleigh, NC 27650-5626 ▼ 919-834-2611 ▼ FAX 919-834-2036

W. Wayne Lindsey
Senior Pastor

Wanda Y. Floyd
Associate Pastor

David G. Heid
Music Director

Michael C. Cooper
Admin. Assistant

December 8, 1996

Rev. Marge Ragona
Covenant MCC
PO Box 101473
Birmingham, AL 35210

Dear Marge,

Greetings in the Name of Our Creator God!

I hope that you and Shirley had a wonderful Thanksgiving and will have a safe and Blessed Christmas!

I am writing in response to whether or not I would be available to visit your church in February. The answer is "Yes". I felt very honored for you to ask and am looking forward to visiting with you and your congregation. So just let me know what else you need from me as far as information.

In relation to class, I have started reading the books that do not have 'supplemental' written beside it. I was thought that we have to read a few of the others also. Could you send to me or fax to me, (919) 834-2036, the other ones that I have to read. I also noticed that one of the dates is the date of your anniversary. Is that date going to be changed or do I have my dates confused? Just let me know.

I will be registering for class this week and sending in my application for scholarship money also. So even if you do not hear from them, I will definitely, Lord willing, be taking Christian Ethics. I have heard so much about you and I am looking forward to the class under your instruction.

Take care and may God continue to lead you and guide you on your spiritual journey.

In Christ's Love,

Wanda

Wanda Floyd
Associate Pastor

Qualifications for Servant Leaders									
Qualification	Explanation	On This Qualification I Rate Myself Low						High	
1 Timothy 3:1-7									
1. Without fault (v. 2)	Having a good reputation, not open to accusations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
2. Husband of one wife (v. 2)	Husband of one wife	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
3. Sober (v. 2)	Calm and collected, sensible, having common sense	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
4. Self-controlled (v. 2)	Restrained, under control, level-headed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
5. Orderly (v. 2)	A well-ordered life, respectable; admired by others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
6. Hospitable (v. 2)	Generous to guests, loves others, willing to share	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
7. Able to teach (v. 2)	Able to communicate the Word of God to others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8. Not addicted to wine (v. 3)	[redacted] does not allow himself to be dominated by anything that will hurt his body or his witness for Christ	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
9. Not violent (v. 3)	Does not strike back physically or with hurtful words; not quarrelsome	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
10. Gentle and peaceful (v. 3)	Patient and easy to get along with	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
11. Not greedy for money (v. 3)	Not a money lover	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
12. Able to manage his family well (v. 4)	Is a good family leader; family is well behaved and respected	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
13. Mature in the faith (v. 6)	Not a new convert	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
14. Respected by those outside the church (v. 7)	A good representative of Christ in all areas of life	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
15. Not arrogant (v. 7)	Not overbearing; does not always have to have his own way	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
16. Not quick-tempered (v. 7)	Does not blow up with anger	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
17. Love what is good (v. 8)	Able to see the good in people and events; pursues good rather than evil	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
18. Upright and holy (v. 8)	A living model of Christianity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
19. Disciplined (v. 8)	Strict training and self-control	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
20. Hold firmly to Word (v. 9)	Obedient and committed to God's Word	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

	Seldom						Consistently
1. ***Energy***—I care for my body by getting the proper food, rest, and exercise.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. ***Persistence***—I stick with a job even in the face of discouragement and disappointment; I am not a quitter.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. ***Courage***—I face dangers and difficulties with firmness.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. ***Decisiveness***—I weigh the facts and take action without undue delay.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. ***Initiative***—I am committed to action where I see a need.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. ***Stability***—I am steadfast and firm and not always changing.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. ***Self-control***—I am levelheaded and control my acts and impulses.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. ***Unselfishness***—I gladly share my life and my possessions with others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. ***Patience***—I can hold up under pressure and am able to keep going even when the load gets heavy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. ***Faith***—I have a deep trust in God.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. ***Integrity***—I am honest, sincere, and dependable.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. ***A servant heart***—I have a genuine desire to serve Christ by serving others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. ***Spirit-controlled***—I am submissive to the leadership and direction of the Holy Spirit in my life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. ***Moral purity***—I am clean in my thoughts and actions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. ***Sense of purpose***—I have a clear sense of direction for my life; I want my life to be used in service for Christ, regardless of my vocation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. ***Humility***—I am free from pride and arrogance; I do not insist on having my own way.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. ***Love for others***—I have a genuine love for other people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. ***Friendliness***—I am an open and caring person and reach out to others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. ***Enthusiasm***—I have zeal and a spirit of optimism.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. ***Sympathy***—I am sensitive, and I identify with others and respond to the needs of persons.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. ***Tact***—I have common sense and do not offend people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. ***Humor***—I have a good sense of humor.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Select from the list two qualifications that represent areas of your life where significant improvement is needed.

Now think of specific actions you can take to improve in each area. For example, if you need to improve in the area of *tact,* you might think of such actions as:

- Be considerate at all times and have regard for others.
- Do not be so quick to speak.

Write your decisions on the following chart.

Area for improvement	Actions I will take
1.	
2.	

Servant Leadership in Practice

In a stone arch, the wedge-shaped stone at the crown of the arch is called the keystone. This stone has a strategic position because it locks the entire arch together. Notice in the illustration on page 37 that the keystone is *a servant heart* (Phil. 2:5). This quality is absolutely essential for leadership. If all the other traits are present but this one is lacking, there will be no true leadership. Remember, leadership is servanthood!

Complete the following Bible study to see how we are urged again and again to have a servant heart and practice servant leadership. Read each Scripture reference; then write a statement summarizing what action the passage says we should take. The first two references are completed for you as examples.

Servant Leadership in Action	
Reference	**Actions we should take**
Romans 12:10	Love one another. Show respect for one another.
Romans 12:13	Share with those in need. Open your home to strangers.
Romans 14:13	
Romans 15:7	
1 Corinthians 16:14	
Galatians 5:13	

Galatians 6:2	
Ephesians 4:2	
Ephesians 4:32	
Philippians 4:5	
Colossians 3:9	
Colossians 3:12	
Colossians 3:13	
1 Thessalonians 3:12	
James 4:11	1 John 3:16-18

List the names of two persons whom your life touches each day.

1._____

2._____

Think of two ways you can be more of a servant to these persons.

1._____

2._____

List two areas of life other than the church that your life touches each day.

1._____

2._____

Think of two ways you can be more of a servant in those areas.

1 Thessalonians 4:18	
1 Thessalonians 5:11	

Read these additional passages related to servant leadership and think of what each passage says about servant leadership (no written response necessary unless you wish).

1 Thessalonians 5:15	James 5:16
1 Timothy 4:12	1 Peter 1:22
Titus 2:7	1 Peter 2:17
Hebrews 3:13	1 Peter 4:9
Hebrews 13:2	1 John 3:11

2._____

The Inner Life of a Servant Leader

Servant leadership is not what one *does* so much as what one *is*. *Character* is more important to servant leadership than *activity* is. Servant leadership is the character, the values, and the attitude of the believer who is actively committed to reflecting Christlikeness in all that he is and does.

The life-style of a servant leader runs counter to the way of the world. One needs more than physical energy to meet the demands of servant leadership. Supernatural power is needed if one is to live a life of servanthood.

Christ provides that power. "I have the strength to face all conditions by the power that Christ gives me" (Phil. 4:13). In fact, Christ *is* the power. Through the person of the Holy Spirit, Christ lives in each believer to guide, teach, comfort, strengthen, and empower. To be filled with the Spirit means to be controlled by the Spirit. A true servant leader is a Spirit-controlled person.

The Bible is a second source of power. There is no substitute for the Word of God in the life of the servant leader. Reading and meditating on the Bible each day provide strength to serve others.

Prayer is a third source of power. God speaks to us through the Bible, and we speak to Him through prayer. Both are essential. Every servant leader must establish and maintain a daily quiet time for Bible study and prayer.

Fellowship with other believers of all ages is a fourth source of power for the servant leader. The Christian life was never meant to be lived in isolation. Nothing can take the place of a warm, loving, and caring church family.

Please exercise on the next

LEADERSHIP QUOTATIONS:

"The seven secrets of being a number one leader:

1. Develop professional expertise
2. Sharpen your communication skills
3. Cultivate enthusiasm
4. Keep an open mind
5. Pay attention to accomplishment
6. Be accessible
7. Respect the people you work with"

- Cheryl Reimold

"Do not lay on the multitude the blame that is due to a few."

- Ovid

"If you live in a country run by a committee, be on the committee."

- William G. Summer

Delegation Authority: Exodus 18: 17-25!

- Jethro's Advice to Moses

"Just keep going. Everybody gets better if they keep at it."

- Ted Williams

"Let no one think he or she has been anointed as the Savior."

- Goethe

"The problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color line."

- W.E.B. DeBois

"No person is your friend who demands your silence, or denies your right to grow."

- Alice Walker

"I started with this idea in my head, 'There's two things I've got a right to, death or liberty'."

- Harriet Tubman

"A person who won't die for something is not fit to live."

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

"When elephants fight it is the grass that suffers."

- KiKuyer Proverb

"Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today."

- Malcolm X

"Keep in mind that neither success nor failure is ever final."

- Roger Babson

"Setting Goals: If you don't know where you are going, you will probably wind up somewhere else."

- Dr. Laurence J. Peter

"If you want to be a leader of the people, you must learn to watch events."

- Benjamin Disraeli

"You must do the think you think you cannot do."

- Eleanor Roosevelt

"Courage is the price that life exacts for granting peace."

- Amelia Earhart

"Gain from your opponents without sacrificing your own strength."

- Japanese proverb

"Nothing is particularly hard if you divide it into small jobs."

- Henry Ford

"It is easy to be independent when you've got money. But to be independent when you haven't got a thing - that's the Lord's test."

- Mahalia Jackson

"We don't see things as they are, we see them as we are."

- Anais Nin

"Be not afraid of going slowly, be only afraid of standing still."

- Chinese proverb

Some quotations are from, "Leadership" by William Safire and Leonard Safir.

Another book that will bring joy is "And The Laugh Shall Be First" a treasury of religious humor, by William H. Willimon.

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Susan Hunt & Peggy Hutcheson

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LEADERSHIP PLANNING OUTLINE

GOAL STATEMENT:

OBJECTIVE STATEMENT:

ACCOUNTABILITY:

PROGRAM:

1.

2.

3.

CRITERIA OF SUCCESS:

RESOURCES: People Cost

1.

2.

3.

Material Cost

REPORTING

EXAMPLE 13-3

Meeting Diagnosis Checklist

	Yes	No
Meeting Goals and Objectives		
Were the issues or topics of the meeting clear to all in attendance?	____	____
Did everyone know what decisions or actions were to be taken?	____	____
Were hidden agendas ferreted out and dealt with forthrightly?		
Were the meeting's objectives reasonable, given available time and resources?	____	____
Was a good sense of priorities established to guide deliberations?	____	____
Notification		
Was the agenda made clear by the meeting organizer before the meeting (verbally or in writing)?	____	____
Were participants told of the meeting sufficiently in advance to allow adequate preparation?	____	____
Were they prepared to make decisions or act?	____	____
Were all necessary materials distributed sufficiently in advance to allow review?	____	____
Was the distribution of unnecessary materials avoided?	____	____
Was the time of the meeting convenient?	____	____
Participation		
Was everyone, needed to take action present?	____	____
Were the interests of all whom meeting outcomes might affect represented?	____	____
Was your contribution to or benefit from the meeting sufficient to warrant your attendance?	____	____
Were people there whose presence was unnecessary?	____	____
The Meeting Environment		
Was the meeting location convenient for you?	____	____
Was it convenient for others?	____	____
Was the room well suited to meeting objectives?	____	____
Was it well suited to the size of the group?	____	____
Was the temperature comfortable?	____	____
Was the room well ventilated?	____	____
Was there sufficient lighting?	____	____
Could the participants see and hear one another?	____	____
Could everyone see and hear the meeting's leader?	____	____
Meeting Format and Aids		
Was the format of the meeting (lecture, panel, brainstorming session, etc.) well suited to meeting objectives?	____	____
Did audiovisual aids contribute to the transaction of business?	____	____
Could you see and/or hear the aids?	____	____
Were they illustrative, enlightening, and understandable?	____	____
Did the person using the aids do so smoothly and effectively?	____	____
Was the use of jargon or unfamiliar technical terms avoided?	____	____
The Meeting in Session		
Was the meeting started on time?	____	____

EXAMPLE 13-3 *(continued)*

Meeting Diagnosis Checklist	Yes	No
Was sufficient time allocated to each item on the agenda?	____	____
Were all people given an opportunity and encouraged to participate?	____	____
Was a spirit of cooperation fostered?	____	____
Was domination of the group by one or two persons avoided?	____	____
Were people presenting information well prepared and organized?	____	____
Did the group adhere to the agenda?	____	____
Was the meeting leader effective in:		
—instilling a sense of common purpose?	____	____
—keeping the group on track?	____	____
—creating an atmosphere conducive to the free exchange of ideas and information?	____	____
—resolving conflict?	____	____
—providing positive feedback when warranted?	____	____
—maintaining interest and enthusiasm?	____	____
—summarizing periodically and/or at the end of the meeting?	____	____
—moving the group toward closure on agenda items?	____	____
Was parliamentary procedure employed when necessary?	____	____
Was it employed properly?	____	____
Were previously adopted bylaws applied properly?	____	____
Was the meeting concluded reasonably close to the scheduled ending time?	____	____
Meeting Follow-Up		
At the close of the meeting, was there consensus on decisions or actions?	____	____
Were follow-up assignments and responsibilities clear?	____	____
Were minutes, follow-up correspondence, or actions executed in a timely fashion?	____	____

CROSSROADS

A place where different cultures meet; a crucial point or place

Newsletter of the African-American Lesbian Gay Alliance

January/February 1992 **Volume VI, Number 1**

Out Of The Closet

The now famous admission by former NBA superstar Majic Johnson that he contracted the AIDS virus because of his promiscuous lifestyle opened up the eyes of some people to help them see that one does not have to be gay, lesbian or bisexual to contract or spread the virus. Some gay, lesbian, and bisexual people say that people refused to see the story behind Johnson's admission.

"They always want to go back to the original sin that (AIDS) came from a gay person; America still thinks that," says Carlton Rutherford, a clinical social worker. "We need to change that."

The lack of attention involving this issue, plus pressures resulting from discrimination against lesbians, gays, and bisexuals, lead to formations of organizations like AALGA. AALGA was formed to organize the African American gay community to improve their situations, explained Charles Nelson. "We do that primarily by trying to create a safe space . . . We're looking at churches who condemn, health care systems that either do not allow access or limit access to gays and lesbians, and at agencies who say that they're providing certain information when they are not."

AALGA is only one of a number of support groups, advocacy groups, and other organizations in the Atlanta area that specifically welcome lesbians, gays and bisexuals and place their problems and issues on the front burner. Nelson, a former co-chair of AALGA, further explains, "Because I am a gay or lesbian person, it does not mean that I am less Black or less concerned about Black issues. I don't separate my Blackness or gayness. It's okay to be Black; it's okay to be gay."

Editor's Note: December 14, 1991 the Atlanta Voice Newspaper published an in depth article on Atlanta's gay and lesbian community. This excerpt is from that article. The Atlanta Voice is Black owned and Black staffed.

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Happy New Year from the Staff of Crossroads

'A Warm December'

It's about survival . . . It's about empowerment . . . It's about life . . .

Vega Press of New Jersey, dedicated to the publication and promo tion of minority artists, announces the publication, in February, 1992 of 'A Warm December.' In 1989 Vega Press published the ground breaking book 'Men of Color,' which was nominated for the 1990 Lambda Literary Small Press Award. It was the first compre hensive collection of literary and visual work to explore the black male couple with poetry, illustrations, and photographs. In praise of 'Men of Color,' 'A Warm December' also uses poetry, illustrations, and photographs, while introducing the work of new writers and artists: Rory Buchanan, Carl Cook, Adisa Osei Chionesu, Richard Evans, Maurice O. Franklin, w.e.s., Vega, and Jerome Whitehead. The three different mediums are delicately woven together, like a fine quilt to tell a story of love, survival and empowerment, against a seasonal background, in a time of victimization and the need for self empowerment during the AIDS crisis.

Hot . . . Wild . . . and Electric . . . Vega combines a strong graphic background with the human figure, 'the simplest and purest from of art,' to create images which are visually and emotionally stimulating. His work has appeared in recent years in the Advocate, Blueboy, Black/Out, In The Life, Brother to Brother, and The Road Before Us. A graphic artist, poet, and photographer, Vega is currently working on a line of black gay greeting cards, a play entitled 'Kiss of Life,' a series of interviews entitled 'Father, Brother, Lover, Son,' and a quarterly erotic magazine.

For further information contact: Michele Karlsberg at (718) 351-9599.

Who Will Protect Us

by Patrick Bell

In the early morning hours of December 26, 1990, Madame Edna Brown was murdered in her home in Southwest Atlanta. Seven day later, the body was discovered hidden beneath a blanket in her bedroom. Her apartment was ransacked and most of her valuables were stolen.

There was an enormous outcry from the community for justice to be served. After around the clock pressure on city hall and the police department by the African American Lesbian Gay Alliance and other politically involved members of the community, the investigation of her murder was taken more seriously. Within days, Sanders L. Taylor was arrested and charged with murder, aggravated assault, grand theft, and theft by taking.

It is reported that a neighbor saw Mr. Taylor removing property from the apartment around the time the murder took place. When the suspect was arrested he was driving Edna's car and her stolen property was located in his home.

December 12, 1991, Sanders Taylor was sentenced to just seven years in prison. In a plea bargain agreement with Assistant District Attorney Don Henderson, Sanders was charged only with grand theft and theft by taking. The charges of murder and aggravated assault were placed on the "dead docket," according to sources close to the case. Taylor will be eligible for parole in two years.

Legal experts have told Crossroads that when this occurs, the county has seven years to bring the charge of murder against Taylor. But they also say that the possibility of this happening is slim.

The life of a well respected member of our community and an outspoken advocate for transvestites has been taken by a cold and calculated murderer. The magnitude and horror of his crime has been overlooked and brushed under the rug by the Fulton County District Attorney's office. Once again, it is evident to all of us in the gay and lesbian community in Atlanta that the district attorney's office does not care about the lives and human rights of gays and lesbians.

Unfortunately, Edna's death did not spark what many of us hoped would be the beginning of a better understanding of the lives of transvestites, cross dressers, and transgendered people. In late 1991, three Black transvestites were murdered. Including Jean Powell, the woman who discovered Edna's body. Investigators believe the same person committed the murders. As of the date of this article, there are no leads in the investigations and the police are no longer pursuing the cases.

My question is: Who will protect us when we are violated?

We as Black lesbians and gay men live invisible and misunderstood lives. Those who are elected and paid to protect our basic rights as citizens, often turn their backs on us. I can not keep from thinking that if Edna or any of the others had been white, female and murdered in the bedrooms of their Buckhead homes that Sanders L. Taylor and the other murderer would be fighting off the death penalty.

People of Color Leadership Conference

The Department of People of Color of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches (UFMCC) along with the Division of White People Healing Racism of UFMCC is sponsoring a leadership conference Saturday, February 22, 1992.

The Department of People of Color exists to support people of color and actualize their personal and spiritual abilities in order to participate fully in the ministry of the UFMCC. White People Healing Racism is a division of the Department of People of Color. It's purpose is to facilitate a learning and growth process among white people which will make them more aware of how racism works in the world, what they do to perpetuate it, and what we all can do to stop it.

The program includes presentations on Conflict and Anger, and the Costs and Joys of Leadership. Rev. Joy Browne, Chaplain at Spelman College is scheduled to speak during the Conflict and Anger presentation. Panel discussions are planned on Community Outreach and Goal Setting, both are open floor discussions. The panel discussions on Community Outreach will include AALGA mem bers LeeVaughn Smith of First MCC and Darryl Walker, panel moderator. of All Saints MCC.

The conference will be held at First MCC, 800 N. Highland Avenue. For more information and to receive a registration form, call (404) 325-5208.

CROSSROADS, the African-American Lesbian Gay Alliance Newsletter is published bi-monthly by the Public Relations Committee of AALGA as its official communique. There is no copyright, and readers are encouraged to reproduce any article noting the source of the information. Submission deadline is the 25th of the month prior to publication. The Public Relations Committee reserves the right to edit submissions without changing the writer's intent. For more information, write to Patrick Bell, AALGA Newsletter, 2401 North Hill Pkwy., Chamblee, GA 30341 or call (404) 458-3003.

Patrick Bell
Editor

AFRICAN-AMERICAN LESBIAN GAY ALLIANCE
Post Office Box 50374, Atlanta, Georgia 30302

Darryl Walker
Layout

At 36

by Charles Harpe

I guess age does have a lot to do with my need to put things into their proper perspective. Jokingly, I have told my friends that I am now the age of the men I have always found most attractive. To me, men in their mid-thirties seem to be at a point where they can begin to apply the lessons life has taught them to reconciling themselves with their pasts, dealing constructively with their present situations, and planning their futures. They are clear about where they are coming from and where they are going, what they want and what they don't want. I believe that now after twelve years of therapy, of confronting my pain and just plain struggling, I, too, am at a point of clarity. I know who I am.

. At 36, my homosexuality is no longer an issue in my life. It no longer defines me or confines me. It is simply a part of me, a relatively small part, in relation to the talents, ambitions, skills, dreams, hopes, desires, and needs that make me the man I am today; and the man I will become. In accepting this, I liberate myself from the silence, the shame, hate, pain, anger, frustration, and bitterness I have experienced from accepting so many lies as truths. I am a Black gay man. There is nothing wrong with me! This is now my armor and my weapon to be used in reconciling my past, dealing with the realities of my present, and shaping my future.

My father died in 1981. He was an alcoholic and my mother complemented his disease with her equally serious addictions to pain and anger. Together they created a household full of tension, chaos, and violence, but empty of love and nurturing. I hated my father for being a drunk. I hated my mother for not leaving him. I hated myself for not being able to make things better. It was in this context that my mother called me a faggot and I began to confront my sexuality.

At 36, I am learning to stop hating, to forgive my parents and, most of all, myself. I have memories of my father carrying me on his back, helping me with my homework, picking me up in his arms after I was hit by a car. He was an intelligent man who loved to read. He encouraged me to excel in school and to go on to college. These things, even when weighed against all the horrors of his drinking, were enough for me to have loved him.

I am talking more to my mother now and understanding her better. I believe that she always did the best she could. I know she is a women of great strength and determination who has passed on to me her sense of humor and her appreciation of the finer things in life. She accepts the reality of my homosexuality and works to be loving and supportive of me.

At 36, I am learning how to love myself, how to take pride in my accomplishments, how to accept that my needs and wants are important enough for me to work to fill them, and how to accept my own value and worth. Through loving myself I have managed to attract into my life some truly dynamic men that I am honored to call friends. With them I have come to know a safe place where there is caring and support, where I can find escape form the pain of racism and homophobia that so fills the world, where I can receive validation of my experiences and perspectives, where I can truly just be me and be loved for it.

At 36, who am I? I am a self-empowered Black gay man.

(Note: Charles Harpe resides in Philadelphia. He is a graduate of Syracuse and Drexel Universities. You can find his complete essay in Brother to Brother: New Writings by Black Gay Men.)

GMHC Fellowship

AALGA and BWMT member, Duncan Teague, has yet another diamond in his tierra. Congratulations are in order for his latest coup. January 13th through February 7th, Duncan will take part in the Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC) Fellowship Program in New York. The management training program was designed to provide more skills in program development as well as short and long range planning.

Several years ago, the GMHC recognized that there was a severe shortage of qualified personnel to manage AIDS and HIV related service agencies.

"What they found were a group of people in the community who were fabulous at organizing and promoting, but lousy at managing . . ." explains Teague, "on the other hand, there were people who had excellent managerial skills, but were ignorant of AIDS and HIV issue's." He goes on to say, "this program was created to fill that gap."

Duncan is one of three fellowship recipients and the first African American from Atlanta. He will work with the Research and Evaluation Coordinator within the Education and Prevention Department at GMHC.

Per usual, he's planning a big "Amethyst" style send off for himself by hosting/hostessing a birthday/fund raising party at his home on January 11th from 8 p.m. until.

Have a great time in New York, Duncan. And bring a bite of the Big Apple back for us!

November 25, 1991

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

The contributors to The Road Before Us (100 Gay Black Poets), and I, wholeheartedly thank you for co-hosting the reading/reception at Georgia State University, last November 1st.

Duncan Teague and I enjoyed ourselves. We also liked sharing some of the writing in the anthology with your members and guests. Our community's support means a lot to us, gay black writers. Once again, thank you.

Peace, strength, and lots of love.

Assoto Saint, Editor

The Bridge Poem

I've had enough
I'm sick of seeing and touching
Both sides of things
Sick of being the damn bridge for everybody

Nobody
Can talk to anybody
Without me
Right?

I explain my mother to my father my father to my little sister
My little sister to my brother my brother to the white feminists
The white feminists to the Black church folks the Black church folks
To the ex-hippies the ex-hippies to the Black separatists the
Black separatists to the artists the artists to my friends' parents . . .

Then
I've got to explain myself
To everybody
I do more translating
Than the Gawdamn U.N.

Forget it
I'm sick of it

I'm sick of filling in your gaps
Sick of being your insurance against
The isolation of your self-imposed limitations
Sick of being the crazy at your holiday dinners
Sick of being the odd one at your Sunday Brunches
Sick of being the sole Black friend to 34 individual white folks
Find another connection to the rest of the world
Find something else to make you legitimate
Find some other way to be political and hip
I will not be the bridge to your womanhood
Your manhood
Your human-ness

I'm sick of mediating with your worst self
On behalf of your better selves
I am sick
Of having to remind you
To breathe
Before you suffocate
Your own fool self

Forget it
Stretch or drown
Evolve or die

The bridge I must be
Is the bridge to my own power
I must translate
My own fears
Mediate
My own weaknesses

I must be the bridge to nowhere
But my true self
And then
I will be useful

Kate Rushin (born 1951, Syracuse, New York) grew up in Lawnside and Camden, New Jersey. She has a B.A. in Theatre and Communications (Oberlin, 1973) and has taught poetry workshops for adults and children.

The Atlanta Feminist Women's Chorus, begun in 1981 by director Linda Vaughn, has 82 singing members..

In July, AFWC will travel to Denver to take part in the GALA IV Choral Festival, an international choral festival of gay and lesbian choruses. Choruses from all over the U.S. and from overseas – including London and Berlin – will gather for this exciting musical event. Then in December, AFWC will appear in concert in Atlanta with composer and singer Cris Williamson for an unforgettable musical evening.

For further information about the chorus, call Charlene Ball at 523-7455.

Obituaries

AALGA extends sympathy to the family and friends of Mr. Kenneth L. Marshall, an assistant district attorney for Fulton County, who was memorialized on Thursday, January 2nd. Kenneth died December 21, 1991 at Piedmont Hospital in Atlanta. He received a degree in economics from Brown University and a law degree from Duke University School of Law in 1976. He was chairman of the "Home Front" Committee of AID Atlanta, which established and maintained residences for people with AIDS who had no place to live. He was a director of Planned Parenthood of Atlanta, a founding member of Black and White Men Together/Atlanta, a founding board member of the Atlanta Campaign for Human Rights, and he belonged to the Brown Club of Atlanta, Friends Atlanta, the Atlanta Urban League, and West Hunter Baptist Church.

In lieu of flowers, the family request's that contributions be made to Project Open Hand, 1080-R Euclid Ave., N.E., Atlanta, Georgia 30307.

AALGA also extends sympathy to the family and friends of Miss Jean Powell, Mr. Joseph James, and Mr. James Newton, deceased in the Fall of 1991. Rest in Peace!